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THE NEW

# STATESMAN AND NATION

## The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THOUGH less favoured than Hitler with the confidence of Providence, we yet venture to doubt his claim that the Nazi revolution has settled the structure of Germany for a thousand years. History is not governed by rhetoric. The main effect of the Führer's latest utterance to the vast organised crowd at Nuremberg must be a final blow to those supporters of the Nazi regime who have cherished hopes of a "second revolution." People must learn, said Hitler, not to ask too much of a revolution and to distinguish between "the possible and the impossible." Or, to put it bluntly, the Socialist part of the National Socialist programme has always been eye-wash. Fascism obeys its paymasters, and it is impossible that it should solve its economic problems. The possible and the actual achievements of Fascism are the concentration camps, the whip, the destruction of freedom, the degradation of the public mind, the drilling, the arming and the return to barbarism.

### Another Nazi Legion

Hitler remarked the other day that the Saar is now the only question that can disturb Franco-German relations. This sanguine view is not widely held, but in any event the Saar is a big blot on the horizon. Mr. Knox, the League's Commissioner, has just presented a most disturbing report, which suggests that the Nazis may be planning a *putsch* in this territory. They have recruited in the Saar at least 10,000 and probably 16,000 young men, for prolonged training in Labour Camps, which are significantly located well outside the demilitarised zone. They receive the usual S.A. training in "leadership": ex-soldiers are specially sought after, and the discipline is severe. That the purpose is to create a quasi-military force is probable. All are trained in *Wehrsport* (military exercises) and some even in aviation. Is this a Saar Legion on the pattern of the Austrian and Ukrainian contingents? And is the plan to disturb the plebiscite next January, if the result seems likely to be from the German standpoint unsatisfactory?

### France's Bid for the Saar

Hardly less disturbing, though very much subtler, is the French plan of campaign outlined in cautious phraseology in a memorandum circulated to members of the League's Council. Its starting point is a clear warning that in the event of a vote favourable to Germany, France will not allow Germany to take over the territory until she has paid in gold the full value of the (originally German) coal-mines which she acquired by the Versailles Treaty. This is an awkward threat, first because the Nazis may be unable to raise the money, and secondly because they have declared that they will on principle refuse to pay anything for the mines. On the other hand, the French promise various moral advantages if the territory should vote for France. Realising, however, that this is an impossibility, they suggest that if the

inhabitants vote for the continuance of the present League regime (*a*) some modification of its form should be arranged, (*b*) provision should be made for a change at a later date in the status of the territory, and (*c*) France will surrender to the Saar territory a large part of the value of the mines. In short, the Saarlanders are to be induced to vote for the *status quo* by a promise that a more popular regime shall be set up at once, that they may return to Germany at a later date, when Hitler falls, and that they will gain financially by turning their backs on the Nazis. All this should be set out in black and white before they vote. The use of the financial screw is ugly and may be impolitic, but to assure the Saarlanders that they need take no final decision in January is manifestly wise and right. The Saar is now a focus of danger only a little less inflamed than Austria.

### U.S.S.R. and the League

Among Hitler's achievements the entry of Soviet Russia into the League of Nations must be counted one of the most important. M. Barthou is expected to raise the question at the first session of the League Council, and U.S.S.R. will in all probability be a member of the League before the end of September. Only formalities and questions of procedure remain to be settled. The real decision was privately made a month ago, when France, Great Britain and Italy agreed that Russia should be invited to join and should be offered a permanent seat on the Council. The Council itself will be unanimously in favour of Russia's entry, while the only negative vote expected in the Assembly is that of Switzerland, which has never yet got over its quarrel with the U.S.S.R. in 1923, when the Soviet representative at Lausanne was murdered in Switzerland. Russia's entry into the League, so improbable before the triumph of Hitler, signalises what is probably more than a shift in the balance of power in Europe. Fear of Germany and, in the case of Russia, fear of a simultaneous attack from Germany and Japan, has brought a return of the pre-war Franco-Russian friendship—but with a vital difference. France rejected Russia's proposal for a military alliance, replying that this was constitutionally impossible for a signatory of the Covenant and Locarno, and that the conclusion of a mutual assistance pact was possible only within the framework of the League. Hence the "encirclement of Germany," which Hitler has so long declared to be the real object of the Powers at Geneva, has almost been brought about by Hitler himself.

### Towards the Left?

Mr. Douglas, the Budget Director, has never been in sympathy with the New Deal. His views on finance are about as radical as those of Mr. Neville Chamberlain, and his resignation may be taken as a sign that the President means to go on trying to restore prosperity by the outpouring of Government funds. Mr. Richberg's latest report on the "New Deal" shows a sharp increase in the numbers receiving Federal relief, and Mr. Hopkins, the Relief Administrator, announces that the allocated funds will soon be exhausted, and more money required. Recent expenditure is at the rate of about £25,000,000 a month. But despite the flow of Government money in this and other forms of relief and subsidy, total purchasing power is plainly declining, and industrial activity getting less. The Conservatives are gathering all their forces for a renewed attack on the "New Deal," and the President is preparing his counter-plans for the reorganisation of the N.R.A. and the institution of a regular system of maintenance for the unemployed. But Mr. Roosevelt's real difficulties are only beginning. Strikes are likely to be endemic now for a long time in the United States and they place Mr. Roosevelt in a position in which it will be very hard for him to retain labour and radical support, unless he is willing, as we fear he is not, for a far more resolute battle with the big employers.

### The Bloody International

The public hearings of the Senate's Committee of Enquiry into the armaments industry have begun in Washington, and will be worth watching. The first sitting brought to light evidence of an alliance of long standing that would link Messrs. Vickers with the American firm, the Electric Boat Company. This firm was the first to produce a practical submersible boat. Instead of reserving its patents for American use, it is alleged that it promptly shared them with Vickers, which, in its turn, built not merely for the British and Dominion governments, but also for Japan. Thus the chief naval rivals were impartially equipped against one another. Vickers and this company divided the world between them, Vickers reserving the British Empire, and its ally the U.S.A., Cuba, and other satellite states. They shared profits on all their sales to governments in the vast neutral sphere of influence. One catches occasional glimpses of Sir Basil Zaharoff stalking about the earth in the robes of a Knight of the Bath, persuading foreign governments to buy submarines from these twin firms. On orders from Spain, the American firm paid him in commissions between 1919 and 1930 as much as £150,000. A son of M. Clemenceau was their agent for South America. In short, in a naughty world that quarrels endlessly over disarmament, the armament industry has created its own harmonious oasis, in which the spirit of international co-operation reigns.

### The Sondermark

British trade negotiators have been in Berlin again this week, trying to collect what they are owed for deliveries of goods during the past few months. Until that matter is cleared up, a good many exporters are holding up deliveries. Meanwhile, Dr. Schacht has ordered German firms to quote prices in marks and not in foreign currencies. This is a way of tightening up the control, which can sometimes be evaded by taking payment in sterling or dollars. Under the new arrangements now in force for current orders—as distinct from payments due for past purchases—foreign firms can pay the German exporter by means of a new kind of registered mark—the Sondermark—which can be acquired only through a Central Bank, at present at a small discount. This means that the exporter is actually paid out of the mark credits lying in Germany to the account of the Bank of England, or whatever Central Bank may be concerned. This lessens the pressure on the Reichsbank for foreign exchange, and enables some trade still to be carried on. But the policy of restricting imports to the bare minimum, and insisting on the larger use of home-produced substitutes, is still being intensified. The Nazis dare not devaluate,

at any rate except as part of a general international agreement; but there is no chance at all of a resumption of free payments without devaluation. Meanwhile, the German people staggers under a load of low wages, part-time employment, and high cost of living; and the Nazi "Labour Front," which was to have abolished the class-struggle and brought employers and workers together in friendly collaboration, is said to be rapidly breaking up, so that there has even been secret talk about allowing the Trade Unions to be re-formed.

**Conservative Trade Unionism**

The Trade Union Congress has not been exciting. Mr. Citrine denounced all dictatorships, adding that he was not making a dead set at the Communists this year, because Communism has ceased to matter, whereas Fascism is very much alive and actively dangerous. Mr. Conley, in his presidential address on Monday, called for a united campaign by all the Trade Unions, under the direction of the General Council, to raise wages and reduce the hours of labour. This was twisted by some newspapers into a demand for a policy likely to lead to a General Strike; but it is safe to say that Mr. Conley had no such intention. He was suggesting a concerted series of movements in the various industries, not the simultaneous presentation of a single body of demands backed by a general threat to strike. After these doings the Congress rejected a resolution calling for a common policy to keep the unemployed inside the ranks of the Unions, on the somewhat inadequate plea that the separate Unions are dealing adequately with this problem already—whereas the figures of Trade Union membership are a clear sign that many Unions are not. Altogether, it is a conservative Congress, in which the few left-wing voices that are raised are promptly stifled. Not for a quarter of a century has the Trade Union Congress been so cautious and conservative a body as it is to-day under the almost unchallenged leadership of Mr. Citrine.

**Teaching the Young Idea Manners**

According to the Ministry of Labour's latest figures, employment and unemployment have both increased. The explanation of this paradox is to be found in the large increase in the number of children leaving school. We have in fact now reached the long-anticipated "bulge" in the number of children reaching the age of fourteen, and for some time to come the new entrants to industry—or would-be entrants—are bound to outnumber largely those retiring or dying. Elementary common sense would have guarded against this situation, which is calculated to lead to the most demoralising kind of unemployment, by taking in time the necessary steps for raising the school-leaving age. But our "economisers" apparently prefer paying out doles to a larger number of workless people to keeping the children longer at school. The Trades Union Congress passed on Tuesday a resolution drawing attention to the serious danger of juvenile unemployment, and calling for the raising of the leaving age to sixteen, with adequate allowances for maintenance. On both educational and industrial grounds this is obviously the right policy: indeed, it is difficult to imagine any case against, apart from a desire to keep the children of the poor in their place. A higher school-leaving age is bound to mean in practice an approach to some sort of universal secondary education, and a consequent lowering of class-barriers.

**Britain's Political Future.**

Inquiries into the political future will find an interesting contrast in two books which have just been published. From *Problems of the Socialist Transition* by Sir Stafford Cripps and others (Gollancz, 5*s*.) we may learn what the leaders of the Socialist League really tell their followers, in contrast to what its opponents would like us to think they say. Lord Allen of Hurtwood's *Britain's Political Future* (Longmans, 6*s*.) makes a very different picture. He wants a union of the younger Conservatives with the Liberal and Labour Parties. He ventures a curious prophecy about the result of the next election. The Conservatives, he thinks, may obtain 325 members, the Labour Party 230, the Liberals 60. The figures seem to us unlikely, but with the general conclusion that the next election is likely to bring stalemate we agree.

## HYDE PARK

IT is a sound principle of English law that he who provokes to violence is himself guilty of a breach of the peace. It is left to the Court to decide whether the provocation is such as to cause apprehension in the mind of a reasonable man. In assessing the blame for a breach of the peace which involves large numbers of people, and which may lead to the destruction of our orderly political habits, the ultimate decision does not rest with the magistrates, but with the mass of non-political citizens. Few people had any doubt about the rights and wrongs at the Fascist meeting at Olympia, for though they might disapprove of organised interruptions they disapproved far more of the deliberate and organised violence of the Blackshirts, which was admitted by the most conservative observers to be out of all proportion to the provocation from the interrupters. The same issue in an even more dangerous form arises over the Hyde Park demonstration and counter-demonstration on Sunday. If the question who is the provoking party is to be fairly answered, the public must take into consideration not only particular incidents that may occur in Hyde Park but also the background of the dispute, the causes for the passions aroused on both sides, and the instructions and slogans printed in the newspapers and leaflets of the two rival groups. Let us state this background as impartially as we can.

In estimating degrees of provocation it is important first to realise that the existence of an organised, drilled and uniformed political party obeying the orders of a single "leader" is, in view of recent events on the Continent, in itself a provocation of a totally new kind in the history of English politics. There are thousands of working people who feel that to remain passive while Fascism grows in England as it grew in Germany is to deserve the destruction of their liberties, the disruption of their political organisations, and the regime of the concentration camp with which they are threatened if they allow the movement to succeed. Middle-class Londoners, disgusted at Olympia and horrified by the recent excesses of the German Nazis, are apt to assume that Fascism has been on the decline in England during the last few months. Sir Oswald Mosley, however, claims that he has made great strides, and we have a considerable body of evidence

in support of his contention. Writing recently to the *Völkischer Beobachter*, Sir Oswald claims that there are six hundred Fascist branches in England outside London, that a hundred thousand people listen to Fascist meetings every week in England, and that at their London headquarters seven hundred regular members are at work in addition to "five hundred S.S. men whom we call the defence force." It should be added that there are probably between six thousand and nine thousand Blackshirts in London and that a North-West Defence Force numbers about two thousand men. Sir Oswald may also truthfully claim a very large body of support in many farming areas where the inhabitants have never before been regaled with well-organised propaganda, conducted from motor vans and loud speakers. Special Blackshirt appeals have been made to co-ordinate and develop Fascist work in the Universities, where Fascist branches have already been formed, and in the public schools in each of which Fascist headquarters claim to have established themselves. Determined onslaughts have also been made upon the industrial areas—five hundred Fascist meetings were held in four weeks in Lancashire—and efforts have even been made to establish Fascist groups within the trade unions. It is clear from the extent of Fascist activities that there is no lack of money behind this organisation. Perhaps even more important than the open propaganda are the signs of Fascist success in obtaining adherents in the Army, Navy and Air Force. We could quote an impressive list of service officers who have recently written in Fascist publications. One of the most interesting is an article on "the military implications of Fascism," by Major-General H. Rowan-Robinson, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., in the *Army, Navy and Air Force Gazette*. This officer argues that the country will be much better organised for war if the Corporate State is introduced into this country "and the general ideas of the 'leader' of the B.U.F. hold the field." He argues that from the military point of view the Fascist system would be extremely beneficial, making quick mobilisation easy and co-operation of branches of the Services complete, while

> as regards industrial preparation against the emergency of war, which is almost as essential nowadays as the preservation and training of combatants, a Ministry of Corporations dealing with every branch of trade and industry would clearly be of great value, for it would enable inter-departmental procedure to be simplified.

The meaning of Fascism, even in this country, becomes even clearer when we turn to the Fascist press. In the *Fascist Review* (a kind of "united-front" Fascist paper which admits that the Fascist parties are not all in agreement, but which blesses them all as progressing towards the right goal where they will ultimately meet) we read that the violence used at Olympia was to be "applauded," because

> the only thing that Reds understand is fear. If the meeting in Hyde Park does take place and the Reds carry out their intention of turning a peaceful political rally into a dog-fight, it is to be sincerely hoped that the "beating up" they will get will cool their ardour once and for all.

The *Fascist*, which is the organ of the Imperial Fascist League, is fanatically anti-Semitic; in its August number it went so far as to repeat one of the mythical "ritual murder" stories against the Jews and offered, in aid of its funds, "the banned Jewish ritual murder number of Streicher's *Der Sturmer*, copiously illustrated, only twenty-four copies available, price £1 each, post free."

Germany and Austria have taught the working classes what to expect from Fascism, and such extracts from the Fascist press confirm their suspicion that English Fascism does not differ very much from the Continental species. They have, therefore, plenty of reason for apprehension, and plenty of experience to support them in refusing to accept the childish argument that Fascism is un-English and that if it is left to itself it will die of ridicule or inertia. They are responding to a challenge to their very lives when they organise a counter-demonstration. But having said so much, we must go on to examine the tactics employed by the Communists for the Hyde Park demonstration. It is unfortunately clear, in spite of the letter we publish this week from Mr. Strachey, that the counter-demonstration will be overwhelmingly Communist, and it is idle to pretend that the tone of the propaganda in preparation for it is well designed to secure an orderly and peaceful meeting. Some of the phrases that have appeared both in the *Daily Worker* and in the leaflets that have been distributed widely among the working classes of London sound uncommonly like incitements to violence. To call upon the workers to see that the Fascists "fly from Hyde Park" is to anticipate the use of force. To provide speakers for the thousands of working class and middle-class citizens who will, in any case, go to Hyde Park on the occasion of a Fascist rally is intelligible enough, but, if the object is to increase public detestation of Fascism, violently phrased leaflets are surely the worst of bad tactics. Such pamphlets as the *Fascism at Olympia* which state irrefutable facts in unemotional terms and leaflets such as were given away with such effect at the Albert Hall meeting would, if widely distributed, do much to counteract the influence of a Fascist display. But Communists who talk about the "united front" act as if their only object was to create the maximum of diversity among the opponents of Fascism, and to rouse as much passion as possible among those who are already fully alive to the dangers of Fascism.

We may summarise the situation by saying that the methods and utterances of Fascists are in themselves the greatest of provocations, but that the Communists in replying in kind are running the risk of helping Fascists to put up the ludicrous pretence that they are the guardians of free speech. If Sir Oswald Mosley's private army is allowed to continue it will inevitably call another private army into existence. But the last thing the vast majority of citizens wish to see is this country given up to the brawls of rival armies. The T.U.C. at Weymouth rightly pressed the Government to prevent this hideous possibility by making political uniforms and military organisations indisputably illegal. But to overcome Fascism it is not enough to ban uniforms and not enough to denounce it, even when the denunciation is as able as Mr. Citrine's. Fascism cannot be conquered by standing at a safe distance and blowing loudly upon a trumpet—tactics which have not succeeded since the capture of Jericho. References were rightly made at the T.U.C. Congress to the fact—which we could illustrate from a number of recent cases—that neither the police nor the magistrates act impartially between Fascists and Communists. The Congress indeed recognised in England to-day all the same symptoms that marked the rise of Hitlerism in Germany, and yet, apart from the call to the Government to prevent the militarisation of politics, it

had no active policy to suggest. And yet Labour must provide the basis of any organisation that is to defeat Fascism. To do that, it must understand its causes. Young men and women, ignorant of economics and with no apprehension of the meaning of the violence they are preparing, are attracted by Fascism because, unsure of employment and without promise of a career, they can find no comfort or assurance in present political leadership. Parliament seems ineffective and old-fashioned politics outmoded. Fascism offers them activity, discipline, colour, display and novelty. All these things can be offered by Socialism if the Socialist leaders believe in their own cause. Fascism takes the phrases of Socialism and couples them with a promise of action. Active Socialist leadership can counteract and defeat Fascism if it will, but not by repeating incantations about the virtues of democracy—virtues which young unemployed men and women do not appreciate. No Fascist meeting in any industrial or rural area ought to take place without a Socialist and anti-Fascist meeting following on its heels, no Fascist propaganda ought ever to be allowed to go unanswered in the local press—and the local press in almost every part of England is bulging with Fascist letters to which intelligent people are usually too superior and too guileless to think it worth while replying. Perhaps Hyde Park will jolt them into some sense of reality. Amazed and horrified at the murders of the Nazis, they imagine that in some way England, with its tradition of humour, order and kindliness, is permanently immune from the violence and the sadism of Fascism and the nauseating lies of *Der Sturmer*. In truth, such horrors may not be so very far away from us: they can certainly be avoided if we wake up.

## THE STRIKE AND THE NEW DEAL

THE strike in the American textile industry is in itself a grave event, for it may involve over half-a-million workers, even if related trades escape the infection. But it is still more interesting and symptomatic, if one regards it, as one must, as a test of the success of the New Deal. At the least it means friction in the mechanism and some set-back in the process of recovery. In the early days of Mr. Roosevelt's administration the workers shared the general optimism. Money wages began to rise, hours were reduced, the demand for labour was a little brisker. Believing for the first time in their experience that "the forgotten man" had a friend in the White House, the workers in this industry, as in so many, dared to flock into their Union. A year and a half has gone over their heads, and they have passed through disillusion to open militancy. They are striking, primarily, of course, against the employers, but also in some sense against an Administration that has disappointed them.

Their grievances are comprehensive. In the first place, the early spurt of "recovery" was not maintained. The demand for textile goods, more especially cotton goods, has slackened in recent months, and once more unsaleable stocks are piling up. One cannot under an Administration that set out to establish a regulated capitalism treat this misfortune as a case of ill-luck or the Act of God. It means on the face of it that the pretentious system by which prices, wages, hours and purchasing power were all to be controlled has some very serious flaw in its mechanism. What it is, one can guess without much difficulty. There is no disinterested control whatever. There is no authority, whether representative or autocratic, that can co-ordinate the clashing interests of the industry with those of its workers and consumers. Still less is there any harmony of direction between the manufacturing and agricultural controls. At the most something was won at the outset for the workers under a quasi-humanitarian impetus, in the shape of a statutory minimum wage, a maximum working week, and the prohibition of child labour. But the main achievement that dwarfs every other aspect of the New Deal was the imposed cartellisation of all manufacturing industries. America is now covered by a close and all-inclusive network of officially constituted price rings, which operate to ensure the profits of their members, and are subject to no effective check either from the consumers, the workers or the Administration.

These price rings, set up to banish "unfair competition," have acted as the short-sighted appetites of the average man commonly prompt him to act when no effective check confronts him. Prices and profits have risen more steeply than real wages. The manufacturer has gained from this rise in price of the finished article very much more than the farmer who furnishes the raw material. The result seems to be, as one would expect, that the buying power of the two main bodies of consumers, the workers and the farmers, has not kept pace with the activity that industry attained in the first period of "recovery." This, indeed, is evident enough in the official figures. It is admitted that on the average real wages have just perceptibly declined, for while nominal wages are up by 8.5 per cent., the cost of living rose in the first year by 9.6 per cent. Exact statistics show the gains of farmer and manufacturer respectively. The little man who grows cotton, often a "poor white" or a negro, gets 22 cents in place of the former 19 cents for the quantity of raw cotton required to make a sheet: but the sheet itself is sold retail for $1.31 instead of the former 99 cents. It is evident from these figures that neither workers nor farmers can afford to buy many new sheets while their incomes stand in this unfavourable ratio to prices. The inevitable effect was delayed by the reinforcement, to the extent of about 10 per cent., of the ranks of the wage-earners from the masses of the unemployed. This meant that the buying-power of the workers was increased by the amount by which the wages of four million men and women exceeded the charity on which they had been subsisting. This was the clear net gain that accounted (together with speculation) for the early phenomena of recovery. But while mass buying power rose to this modest extent, profits soared. The official index of average profits rose in this first year from minus 6.9 to plus 32.2. In the case of industrial companies the rise of industrial profits amounted to 600 per cent. One suspects that sooner or later this fatal disproportion between stagnant wages and rising profits, between spending and accumulation, must reveal itself in the condition of trade. And in fact the recovery boomlet has ebbed in the last two or three months.

Against this background one can understand why the textile workers were driven to strike. Their industry has been on the down-grade since spring. Employment and total wage-payments have both dropped through the summer by about 20 per cent. That is the justification for the proposal of the United Textile Workers to "spread the work" by reducing hours from forty to thirty-four weekly, without loss of wages. The Administration was against them when they made this demand in May, but on the eve of the strike it proposed to the manufacturers a working week of thirty-six hours without loss of pay, and met with a blank refusal. The men have, however, other and bitterer grievances than these. They say that in the Southern States (now the centre of gravity of cotton manufacture), where the masters are as technically progressive as they are morally ruthless, the Code is habitually dodged. Weekly wages are often $7 instead of the legal minimum of $12: the employers will not bargain collectively, and scientific management contrives, by giving more looms to each worker and similar devices, so to "stretch out" his capacity that the apparent gain in leisure by shorter hours is actually a doubtful boon. But the central fighting issue that knits up all the rest is the demand for the recognition of the United Textile Workers. By refusing the invitation of the

Administration to meet the workers' representatives in conference, the employers have turned this strike into a typical New Deal struggle. The Administration has been able to do nothing to enforce the law that purports to ensure the right of collective bargaining, but the President has now offered to set up a Mediation Board. All that can be said as yet is that the President's initiative has been welcomed by both employers and strikers.

To prophesy, across 3,000 miles of ocean, about the strikers' prospects would be rash. None of the more notable of the many New Deal strikes has yet brought any clear victory for recognition. Nor is it usually a hopeful adventure to strike against a falling market, when the employers have large stocks in hand. One hopes that the textile workers will have better luck than the coal miners, the men in the car industry, or the spirited dockers of California. That last instance suggests that amid these struggles a sharp crystallisation of opinion is going on. In California, which may only be moving a little faster than the rest of the continent, property in command of the State goes definitely Fascist, while the "forgotten men," still trusting Mr. Roosevelt, and dazzled by his legend, herd together in a camp far to the Left of his Administration, with a spirited, impulsive ex-Socialist as their candidate for the governorship. That the State, with the regulars of the two traditional parties in avowed collusion, has in effect gone Fascist, is, we think, a fair interpretation of the facts. The strike, one of the clearest and most justifiable of the many vain efforts to secure collective bargaining, was broken by the systematic use of gangster violence, backed by all the powers of the militia, the police and the courts. The normal procedure was that armed vigilantes (meaning partly Fascist amateurs, but chiefly hired gangsters) raided every house or office where the men or their helpers congregated, smashed the furniture and beat up all present. This done the police arrived, took over their prisoners, beat them up again, and had them convicted for vagrancy or what not, or merely held them indefinitely, the magistrate offering for form's sake $1,000 bail. The police, as documents now published reveal, daily reported their doings in these raids to the Employers' Association. It in effect rules California, runs the regular parties, appoints the elected judges and officials, and of course controls the police. That in many States is the reality of life in America. The forgotten man's President does not effectively rule. He is a great figure. He carries with a rush some humanitarian reforms, and circumstances may well force him still further to the Left. But the law and the police, like the economic mechanism of the New Deal itself, remain tightly in the hands of capital. The revolt seems to the European observer spasmodic, sentimental, rich in emotion and poor in realistic thinking. These workers, disillusioned with the New Deal, will strike readily enough to show their sense of its failure. But in most States they will vote under the conservative leadership of their Unions the regular Democratic ticket. Here and there they will turn with pathetic trust to some half-way house, if a magnetic personality preaches Populism, or inflation, or, like Upton Sinclair, such dilution of Socialism as may be administered under the Democratic banner. The issue is still confused and ill-understood. Some further experience of the New Deal may clarify it and bring the frontal attack on the dictatorship of property.

# A LONDON DIARY

SIR HENRY WOOD has just announced with the boyish gusto which is one of his best qualities that an orchestral transcription of a Bach Toccata which he ascribed to a dead Russian called Paul Klenovsky is really a product of his own pen. It was a jolly little joke, but unluckily a transcription of Bach (unless made by Schönberg) is usually not so personal a work that a critic should be able to detect its authorship. And I disbelieve the truth of the implication that an unknown foreign composer would command more respect from serious critics than an Englishman. Moreover an original work by Dr. Vaughan-Williams, for instance, would instantly be recognised as his, unless the composer had deliberately disguised his style. Years ago the Society Portrait Painters, or some such body, put into their show a number of sham post-impressionist pictures signed with foreign names and really painted by their own members. Presumably they hoped to take in the critics, but the hoax fell flat. The paintings were too feeble to deceive any experienced person. In the case of composers, singers and dancers some prejudice against the English may survive, especially in America. Stokovsky might have been less welcome in Philadelphia if he had remained plain Mr. Stokes. But the success of Miss Butt (to say nothing of Miss Tubb) does not seem to have suffered from her English name. And though Melba is a more romantic name than Armstrong, it was never a disguise for the nationality of that famous Australian. It is no doubt a consolation to Mr. Smith or Miss Robinson to believe that they would be celebrated if they were called Schmidt or Rubinstein, but I am afraid the notion is mostly nonsense. The dull fact is that most of the best painters happen to be French, most of the best singers to be German or Austrian, and it is to their performances, not to their names, that they owe their reputation. If you could paint as well as Pablo Ruiz it would not matter whether you called yourself Jones or (as he does) Picasso.

* * *

The fifth sense of the word "folly," given in the *Oxford Dictionary*, is "a name given to any costly structure considered to have shown folly in the builder. (But c.f., *F. folie*, 'delight,' 'favourite abode.')." The Faringdon Folly, however, is not a building, but a wood on top of a knoll in Berkshire, which makes a conspicuous landmark because of the flatness of the surrounding country. Lord Berners, attracted perhaps by its name as well as by its proximity to his home, purchased the Folly in order to preserve it, and now wishes to build in the middle of the wood a tower. Celebrated for the variety of his accomplishments, a composer of music, a painter and a writer, Lord Berners is one of the few peers who both practise and patronise the Arts in the best Eighteenth Century Manner; and anyone with a sense of history must recognise the traditional English *Milor* in his wish to pile Folly upon Folly. The design for the tower, made by Lord Gerald Wellesley, is inspired by the fine tower of the neighbouring church at Uffington (though not, of course, a mere copy), and, like many such monuments built in the eighteenth century, it would add to the picturesqueness of the landscape. Or rather it would do so, if it could be seen. For its top would rise only 5ft. above the surrounding wood, and would, therefore, be invisible except from the nearest rising ground, some six miles away. In spite of this, the local rural district council have vetoed the construction under the Town Planning Act, and one of the arguments alleged to have been used was that this would be a great waste of money, and why did anyone want a tower anyhow? I may add that there is nothing except his own good taste to prevent Lord Berners cutting down the wood and thus destroying the landmark. The object of the Town Planning Act was not to give sumptuary powers to district councils. Correspondence in this paper has already shown it in use to prevent the erection of houses lacking the gables dear to speculative builders. It is very unlucky that an Act which might be used to alleviate the ugliness of the buildings one sees going up on all sides should be discredited by abuse. There is, moreover, obviously a danger of its being used merely to gratify the personal spite of local busybodies. Fortunately in the case of the tower an appeal is possible to the Ministry of Health.

* * *

Two correspondents have taken me to task for my paragraph last week about Calisthenes's excursions into politics. I hasten to reassure them: Mr. Selfridge need not lose his sleep, my boycott of his House is not very serious. (Incidentally in his animal department the other day I found for sale a collection of young alligators or crocodiles—the Perfect Present for the

Friend with a Swimming Pool.) But one of my correspondents "fails to see any difference between my attitude and that of the village squire who refuses to deal with the Radical grocer." The difference, however, is there. Of course I do not object to dealing with a shopkeeper who has different political opinions to my own, but I resent his using these opinions to advertise his goods. Suppose that the village grocer had covered his shop-window with political slogans—"If you believe in Disestablishment, Shop morn and eve in this establishment" or "If you're a Liberal, you should know, Sir, I am the local Home Rule grocer." Surely the squire who shared Mr. F. E. Smith's view of Disestablishment would have been justified in withdrawing his custom. It is Calisthenes, not myself, who brings politics into business. So I can't help regretting that the local Co-op. does not stock crocodiles.

* * *

Held up for twenty minutes or so at a corner the other day, I began to wonder why more effort is not made to solve the increasing traffic problem by inducing more people to travel underground. I should have thought Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and other towns all needed undergrounds, and that London needed at least one more tube. The London Underground has faster, more frequent and far more comfortable trains than the Paris Métro, but the network of lines covers Paris far more completely. Here there are large districts which are inaccessible by train. A new line running in a North-Easterly direction is specially required to bring Battersea and Chelsea into contact with the great East-and-West arteries—the Central London, the Piccadilly, and the Inner Circle. Running under the Thames at Albert Bridge, it could cross the King's Road at Chelsea Town Hall, then go to South Kensington Station, and underneath the Park to Lancaster Gate, and so to Edgware Road Station and St. John's Wood. At present the Park makes it impossible to travel North and South, except on foot or in a taxi, anywhere between Park Lane and Church Street. The cost of building such a Tube would be heavy, but enormously less than that of widening miles of streets.

* * *

Here it seems to me is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the penal system. To quote from a press report:

> George Gray, aged 73, sentenced at Willesden to six months' hard labour for stealing a suit, was stated to have a mania for such thefts. He had 60 convictions, most of which were for stealing clothes. His prison sentences totalled 27 years.

Could anything be more absurd? Obviously the old man is a public nuisance and should be in an institution for criminal eccentrics.

* * *

A correspondent sends me the following remarkable example of "determined patriotism." During August, the Hastings Museum and Art Gallery had among its exhibits a valuable facsimile of the Bayeux Tapestry lent by the Museum and Art Gallery of Reading. The final scene represents the defeat and flight of the English after the death of Harold at the Battle of Hastings. The last of the Latin inscriptions explaining the events depicted on the tapestry runs: *et fuga verterunt Angli*, which being translated is "And the English fled." This inscription, however, both in the text accompanying the facsimile and in the official catalogue (new edition 1928), is accorded the more suitable rendering of: "The English still fight"!

CRITIC

## THIS ENGLAND

**Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mr. K. A. M. Barton.**

**All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.**

The holidays are almost over.

Britain is getting down to business again. Without doubt, it is going to be a prosperous autumn.

How can we tell?

From this fact.

The "Sunday Express" to-day is twenty-eight pages.—*Sunday Express.*

Last night the royal microphone lay in a safe deposit in Glasgow, watched by a man who never slept.—The *Bulletin.*

Happily we can safely feel that the *Börsen Zeitung* will not shake our implicit faith in the strict sense of justice and impartiality of what may be termed the lay Bible of all cultured Englishmen—the *Times.*—Letter in the *Times.*

I would very much like to know what justification these writers have for their extreme pacifist views. . . . whether we wish it or no, we have still the battle of Armageddon to face. This is, as everyone knows, according to Scriptural prophecy, which is infallible. Will these friends then, when this great battle of Christ's forces versus anti-Christ takes place, be pacifists. . . . This is a matter which cannot be side-tracked, as the day of Armageddon might come at any time now.—Letter in the *British Weekly.*

Prince George will presumably relinquish his appointment as an inspector of the Home Office Factories Department after his marriage.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Miss Lawrence has novel decorative ideas of her own, and she has papered the passages of her new home most effectively with sheets of newspaper so that as the years pass their literary interest will steadily increase.—The *Star.*

Local directors of Barclays are encouraged to hunt at least one day a week.—*Evening Standard.*

Lord Cambridge is among the fathers who likes his daughter to wear something exclusive, so that he can always recognise her in the park.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Astrologers find that, no matter under which sign of the Zodiac you were born, it is now easy to make yourself fascinating and attractive by the simple daily care of your skin, in your own home. . . . Blonde or brunette, any woman can now arouse deep, passionate, and constant love in the heart of the man she wants. Success guaranteed in every case with T—— Vanishing Skinfood or money refunded.—Advertisement in *Daily Mail.*

Not only British, but literally thousands of Americans pay homage to Thomas Gray, the poet who wrote the immortal "Elegy." By recording the poem at the graveside of the poet, and introducing the actual curfew, organ and vicar of the celebrated Stoke Poges Church, Columbia have perpetuated for all time a masterpiece held in reverence the world over.—*Columbia Catalogue.*

So devoted to her husband is a famous British film star, that she stood outside a tobacconist's for 15 minutes, begging cigarette pictures to add to his collection—which is already worth thousands of pounds!—*Reynolds' News.*

## SCIENCE AND WELFARE

AT the British Association meeting of 1932 Sir Alfred Ewing showed that even eminent scientists were beginning to wonder if science as it had been applied had not ceased to be an unmixed blessing. Last year Sir Gowland Hopkins, the President of the Royal Society, made a plea for a closer relation between science and human welfare. At the present meeting of the British Association in Aberdeen this relationship will be a dominating issue. Though the idea of a general meeting of the Association to discuss the whole question of science and welfare has been abandoned, the same purpose is to be served by a meeting of the Association of scientific workers under the chairmanship of Sir Richard Gregory, and the thirteen sections, representing the various branches of science, are each devoting at least one day to the public problems which science has done so much to create. In the economic section, for instance, Sir Josiah Stamp is opening a discussion on the technique of economic change and the problems of technical education, and the physiology section is dealing with the consequences of the malnutrition which may be observed in any of England's devastated areas.

The fact is that though scientists have not yet fully woken up to their peculiar responsibilities, they can no longer take up the position that they are pure seekers after knowledge, unaffected by the structure of the society their knowledge transforms. Economic misery, with its accompaniments of Fascism and preparation for war, affect them both as scientists and as citizens. They watch with growing alarm the monstrous waste and perversion of their discoveries, and they have discovered, since the Hitler revolution, that the misapplication of knowledge may also involve the degradation of science itself, and, incidentally, personal danger to every disinterested scientist.

No one knows so well as the scientist the contrast between what is and what might be. A general condition of well-being and leisure is now technically possible. Science has made it possible, but science is at the same time responsible for agricultural and industrial over-production and for permanent unemployment. It is science that has given the world the technique of mass demagogy through wireless and cinema, and has at the same time multiplied the horrors of war and brought the imminent fear of it over every man, woman and child in the world. Science is being frustrated and perverted, and, however indirectly, however unwittingly it has been done, the moral responsibility of scientists cannot be shaken off.

The scientists' consciousness of moral responsibility is reinforced by material considerations. One immediate effect of the crisis was a check to the rapid growth of research. The worst effect is felt by young workers who might reasonably have expected a brilliant career of research. In England the older Universities have naturally felt the shock least, but the provinces have suffered, and so has the semi-industrial research fostered by the Government. Out of twenty odd research associations three have shut down, and only half a dozen can be said to be flourishing. But it is not so much the actualities as the prospects of scientific research that have suffered. Research is pre-eminently a long-range investment, and where for financial reasons it is impossible to plan, the work tends to take on a very hand-to-mouth character. Most scientific workers hold their positions only by the year, very many on three-monthly notice. The situation is so bad that it is even commented on in the official D.I.S.R. report for 1932-3 :

> We feel that unless increased expenditure is incurred . . . opportunities will be lost. Problems of this kind . . . must not be neglected if industrialists in this country are to retain, and in some instances regain, the position that has been the pride of the British Empire and the envy of the world.

Only in one aspect of research has there been no slackening, and that is in research for war. This is carried on not only in the Services Departments, but extensively by industrial firms, and in a now somewhat concealed way by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and the Universities. The scientific worker finds himself in a very difficult situation. It is not only difficult to refuse to do war research work, but it is difficult even to know what is war research work, as so many apparently innocent pieces of applied science, such as hydrogenation of coal, or the equations of aero dynamics, acquire economic justification almost entirely on account of their potential value in defensive or offensive war. It is impossible to have anything to do with the chemical, the heavy metal, or the aeroplane industry without being involved directly or indirectly with war research. This situation is naturally used by the apologists of the official point of view to justify war research itself, on the ground that it may also be useful for civil purposes. This argument ignores the fact that, while at most some small fraction of military research may have an industrial value, the whole sum of money spent directly on war research, amounting to something in the neighbourhood of £2,000,000 a year, would, if applied to civil research, more than double its output. This is the case in England, which is to-day almost a pacifist country. In Germany there is no nonsense about it at all : the only function of physical science is for active and passive war purposes, and the only other use of the biological sciences is to strengthen the Nazi myth of Aryan superiority.

The advent of Fascism in Germany has thoroughly stirred and alarmed scientists. The number of distinguished refugees who are working now in English laboratories, and the far greater number of their colleagues whom English scientists know to be suffering in Germany, have served to bring home to them the realities of Fascist rule. The appearance of the same demagogic, anti-intellectual, anti-Semitic forms of Fascism in England has, however, not yet greatly affected them, because they cannot take them any more seriously than did their German colleagues when everyone still regarded Hitler as a harmless mountebank.

Although scientists feel they ought to do something about social and economic questions, they are realist enough to be a little afraid to do so. There is a strong feeling among more conservative and eminent scientific workers that it is not advisable to meddle in these matters, and that scientists had better keep clear of them if they value their positions or even their liberty. As Professor A. V. Hill said in answer to Professor J. B. S. Haldane[1] : " If scientific people are to be accorded the privileges of immunity and tolerance by civilised society they must observe the rules," and one of the tacit rules which is made quite clear is not to interfere with or even criticise the action of Government departments or large industrial firms. As time goes on, however, a purely negative attitude is beginning to break down. The feeling of the great majority of scientists that " something must be done about it " is expressed in the editorials of *Nature* itself[2] :

> No scientific worker who has glimpsed the possibilities which machine power has put within our grasp can, however, turn aside from the task of assisting society to avert the evils with which mechanisation threatens it, and to translate these possibilities into achievement.

Unfortunately, it is with these admirable but vague aspirations that the action of scientists too often begins and ends.

The first reaction to examine the situation is valuable enough. In the last few years numerous small societies of scientists and engineers have also occupied themselves in examining the whole question and suggesting possible remedies. Such surveys as that Professor Julian Huxley has published in *Scientific Research and Social Needs* reveal, a fact that was hardly new, that science was being used far more for profit than for welfare ; that scientific research was directed towards reducing production costs rather than increasing the amenities of consumption, and that this reflected itself in a completely lopsided distribution of research in favour of the physical and chemical as against the biological and psychological sciences.

The remedies that appeal most to scientists are currency reform and national planning. Of currency reform we need say nothing, because it does not attract the scientists as scientists, except in so far as they are more aware than others of the ludicrous disparity between productive possibilities and actual consumption. " Planning," on the other hand, is now taken as the great scientific solution for our present difficulties. It has replaced the earlier favourite, rationalisation, the ill-effects of which scientists have at last been forced to realise. For the most part the suggestions of planning remain vague aspirations. The only kind of planning that is in fact compatible with present society, that interferes, that is to say, neither with private profit nor with national sovereignty, is the restrictive planning which we see in full swing in Germany and Italy, while in this country Mr. Elliot is giving us a mild foretaste of it.

*Nature*, in the only leading article which contained any detail treatment of economic subjects[3], was remarkably open on this question. The writer scarcely concealed his political sympathies : " The Fascist plan to establish the corporate state, within limits in which interest may operate laid down by the Government, is receiving increasing serious considera-

[1] *Nature*, Dec. 23rd, 1933. [2] *Ibid.*, Aug. 25th, 1934.
[3] *Ibid.*, July 7th, 1934.

tion and support." It is distressing that scientists, who are temperamentally and traditionally opposed to Fascism when it shows itself abroad, should be misled into supporting schemes which would bring it to pass at home. On the economic side this sort of planning is in fact as fatal to science as it is politically. The examples of planning given (in rubber, tin, paint, etc.) were all examples of restriction of output, with the object of holding up internal prices. Any loss of employment such restrictions entail was to be made up by the development of salesmanship (by which more goods can be sold abroad), while at the same time it is urged that foreign competition, which might interfere with this scheme, should be penalised. The implications of this scheme for science are only too obvious. If prices can be artificially held up the demands for scientific research for lowering costs and improving product largely disappear, and at the same time the international rivalries created between such autarchic states necessitate ever greater war preparations and the diversion of scientific research for this purpose.

Scientists may reach this attitude partly through simple ignorance of economics, but more from an instinctive awareness of what kind of attitudes will best please those at present in power. Luckily, there is some sign that not all scientists, particularly younger scientists, can be made to accept it. The conflict comes out most clearly on the question of war. Seventy-nine research workers and teachers in Cambridge signed a protest against the Incitement to Disaffection Bill, which was at the same time an affirmation of their belief that science must no longer be perverted for military uses. If it were possible to get all scientists to take up this attitude this would be far more effective in stopping modern war than any Kellogg Pact. The same awareness is spreading to the economic field, though it has not yet been clearly expressed in England. In France, where the danger of Fascism is more imminent, a group of scientists led by Langevin and Richet, and including many other distinguished names, as well as some 2,000 younger scientists and teachers, in co-operation with a similar group of writers led by Alain and Gide, has already publicly affirmed its opposition to Fascism in all its forms, and its resolution to stand by the organised working-class in defence of their liberties. Here, where the choice of the scientists for or against Fascism has not been so decisively forced, it would be as well if, in whatever time is left, they would examine the implications of the work they are doing, and the economic and political policies that they are prepared to support.

SCIENTIFIC WORKER

# CORONERS

THIS country spent £92,652 upon Coroners' salaries in 1932, the latest year for which statistics are available. The expenses in connection with their Courts came to £115,751. It is said that we cannot afford additional judges, at £5,000 a year each, urgently as they are needed. Yet it is difficult to point to any useful purpose served by the continuance of the Coroner's Court.

The office of Coroner is very ancient, and doubtless was a necessary one until the organisation of an efficient police force rendered it obsolete. For practical purposes the only duty of the Coroner is to hold an inquiry into the cause of death where no doctor's certificate can be given. In actual fact, the inquiry where any question of crime is involved is made by the police, and if any person has been charged before the magistrates in connection with the death the inquest has to be adjourned until the criminal proceedings are over. In motoring cases in particular inquiries are always made by the police, and if they consider it necessary there is a prosecution. The Coroner is usually mainly concerned so to direct the jury that they shall not bring in a verdict of manslaughter. In other cases of death by accident full and proper inquiry by experts, in railway and mining accidents by Government officials, is made. As to the immediate cause of death there is usually little doubt, and, when there is, the point is of importance only to the insurance companies involved, who are always represented at the inquest. The Coroner's inquest is never of use to the police, for they are the source from which the Coroner gets his information. An inquest, however, frequently hampers the police in their investigations, and often prejudices the fair trial of an accused person. There are no rules of evidence at the Coroner's Court. Any sort of hearsay or gossip is freely admitted if the Coroner thinks fit, as he usually does.

It is in cases of suicide that the average Coroner allows himself the widest licence. The immediate cause of death and the fact of suicide are usually obvious, but many Coroners think themselves justified in going fully into any matters, however intimately they may concern living persons, which may affect the question as to why the deceased took his or her life. Especially is this the case where there may be any sexual irregularity. Two or three years ago a child of two died from gas poisoning. Not content with eliciting the possibly relevant fact that the child was illegitimate the Coroner proceeded to inquire into the relationship of the father with his wife and with other women, all the names being brought out in open court. In a case last year a married man committed suicide. A girl with whom he had apparently been carrying on an intrigue had her love letters read aloud to her in open court, and was bullied by the Coroner and told she was the cause of the man's death, with the result that she fainted. Obviously it was unnecessary to call her as a witness except as a punishment.

In a recent case the widow of a Christian Scientist was called as a witness. She said that her husband adopted Christian Science because she herself had been cured after many years of sickness. The Coroner is reported to have said to her: "Four Christian Science practitioners did not save your husband's life?" To which the widow answered "No." Later, when she said "God can do anything," he exclaimed, "Don't talk nonsense." In examination of another witness he inquired, "What do you ask God to do?" and on receiving the answer, "I realise He does everything good," he replied, "I suppose you do not realise that in the eyes of right-thinking people you are talking utter nonsense."

A week or two later an inquest was held by another coroner on a woman who had died as a result of a forceps having been left in her body when she underwent an operation thirteen years earlier. The Coroner invited the medical students from St. Bartholomew's Hospital to attend the inquest. A surgeon gave evidence that it was the presence of the forceps that caused the woman's death. The Coroner in summing up was careful to say that although someone had blundered the surgeon ought not to be held blameworthy.

The same Coroner held an inquest last year on a woman who had died after receiving Christian Science treatment, and told the husband that if proper medical attendance had been obtained his wife would have been spared much unnecessary suffering. Incidentally, a police surgeon is reported to have said that the woman would have been alive and well if he had been called in weeks or months earlier, but the doctor who conducted a post-mortem said that there was long-standing disease of the heart. Some day, perhaps, there may be an inquest, presided over by an unorthodox practitioner, upon a person who has died as a result of a doctor's mistake in diagnosis.

The Coroner is a law unto himself. Barristers and solicitors have no right of audience at his court, but appear by his permission. He can, and frequently does, say whatever he pleases without regard to the pain and injury his words may inflict upon others, and he can do so without fear of contradiction. There is no appeal from the verdict at a Coroner's Inquest, although in certain circumstances the Attorney-General may cause the inquest to be held again. The worst instance of what may result from a coroner's inquest happened in the case of Mrs. Pace, about six years ago. After a very protracted inquest the jury, by the direction of the Coroner, brought in a verdict of murder against a woman who was subsequently

found not guilty by the direction of the judge without calling on the defence. A good example of its uselessness was in the "Brides in the bath" case. Coroners' inquests were held on two of Smith's previous victims, and resulted in verdicts of death by misadventure.

A Coroner appointed since May 1st, 1927 must be a barrister, solicitor or doctor of not less than five years standing. There are, of course, many Coroners of no particular qualifications. There is nothing to prevent a Coroner from being in private practice, so that the interests of his clients or patients may be, and often are, involved when he holds an inquest. A Coroner's jury usually consists of any unoccupied persons who can be got together, and is as a rule inferior to any other class of jury.

Probably the only reason why the office of Coroner has not been abolished is that it has never occurred to any Government that this might be done. It has survived in much the same way as the buttons on the tails of morning coats have done. A police officer not below the rank of Superintendent might be empowered to grant burial certificates where no doctor's certificate could be given, and the abolition of Coroners would enable us to afford sufficient judges and even a few more stipendiary magistrates. SOLICITOR

# Correspondence

## FASCISM AND COMMUNISM

SIR,—Mr. Carpenter's letter and your own comments on the Labour Party's official attitude to the forthcoming Fascist rally in Hyde Park both seem to obscure the really important facts. For, after all, the facts are very simple. The chief facts are: (1) Sir Oswald Mosley is staging a Fascist demonstration in Hyde Park on September 9th. He has every right to do so if he wishes. Nobody has any right to try to prevent him by organised obstruction or force, except the authorities. (2) The Communists openly pursue a policy of breaking up Mosley's meetings wherever they can.

For instance, the following are odd extracts from a copy of the *Daily Worker* (August 3rd, 1934) which I happen to have by me: "Fascists again cleared out of North Shields." "Police protection does not save them." "Short shrift for Fascists." "Nottingham workers destroy their first meeting."

The paragraphs under these headlines refer to the Communists' "determination to clear the Blackshirts off the streets" and inform us that (in North Shields) "the Fascists and the police were nowhere with the thousand workers howling them down," and that "Nottingham workers are not going to allow the murderous doctrine of Fascism to be preached."

Following this policy the Communists are endeavouring to inveigle the Labour Party and the Trade Union Movement into doing the same thing, under the guise of "combating Fascism" by a "united front." The leaders of the Labour Party know quite well that this is the one way to giving Mosley exactly the chance he is waiting for. It would also present the Government with an excellent case for investing the police with wide powers to ban or restrict all political meetings.

For the Labour Party to organise a *separate* counter demonstration in Hyde Park on September 9th, parallel to Mosley's rally and the Communist attempt to break it up, would be madness of the most dangerous kind. Labour has nothing to gain, and everything to lose, by participating in any way in such squabbles. I disagree strongly with the official Labour policy of ignoring Mosley as a negligible force, but I equally disagree with going to the other extreme, and being stampeded into stupid and undignified attempts to interfere with Mosley's meetings in the manner advocated by the Communists. J. STEWART COOK

Rushmere, Brading,
Isle of Wight.

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SIR,—If your correspondent, Mr. J. Carpenter, is, as he implies, an opponent of Fascism and not merely, as he says, one who believes "in the maintenance of order, whatever the government in power," I should like to ask him a few simple questions.

Does he really advocate, as does the Joint National Council of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress, that the Fascists should be allowed to stage a large and impressive demonstration of their Storm Troops in London on September 9th without any expression being given to the opposition to Fascism felt by the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of London? Does he deny that the Fascists, being willing and able to spend really large sums of money, are perfectly able to stage such a demonstration? Is he so totally bereft of any sense of political reality as to deny that, if all anti-Fascist opposition to such a demonstration were stifled and no one in London showed any objection to Fascism at all, while the Fascists could visibly mobilise thousands of supporters, Fascism would be greatly strengthened? Is he so totally ignorant of human psychology as to be able to pretend to himself that if, on the contrary, the streets of London and Hyde Park are both filled on Sunday next with hundreds and thousands of organised workers carrying Anti-Fascist banners and expressing their extreme hostility to Fascism, so that the few thousands of Fascists are drowned in a sea of anti-Fascist demonstrators, a very serious blow at Fascism will not be struck?

We are told that the sympathy of the middle class will be directed towards the Fascists if working class indignation against Fascism is not stifled. I claim to have as good a knowledge of English middle class and governing class psychology as those who make this point, and I am perfectly confident that, on the contrary, the degree of support which the governing class gives to Fascism will be largely determined by the amount of working class opposition which Fascism is observed to excite. If it is found that the British workers remain apathetic or cowed, then the governing class will conclude that Fascism is a practicable and useful method of rule which it may be necessary to resort to in some future emergency. If, on the other hand, it is found that wherever Fascism raises its head in this country it stirs up a hornets' nest of working class activity, the governing class also will think twice about adopting this expedient; so that, even from the point of view of determining the attitude of the governing class to Fascism, the maximum, and not the minimum, of working class activity is needed.

You, Sir, say that a Communist demonstration is for many reasons undesirable. If you mean by this that it is undesirable that the demonstration against Fascism on September 9th should be confined to Communists, you are indeed justified. Fortunately, however, we are already in a position to assure you that there is no danger whatever of this occurring. We have already the support of such important Trades Union bodies as the National Executive of the Chemical Workers and of the Furnishing Trades Association, the London District Committee of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the Passenger Section of the London Transport Workers, a large number of London Trades Councils, and far too many individual Trades Union Branches to mention. Finally, let me say that the signatories who initiated the appeal for a demonstration did so, as they stated in their initial letter, very largely because they were convinced (as you, Sir, recognise) that if the London workers went in an unorganised and scattered way to Hyde Park they stood the greatest danger of being beaten up by the Fascists, while if they went in really formidable numbers and marching in organised processions, it was most unlikely that they would be attacked. Thus you are fully justified in your view that one of the objects of the counter demonstration is to prevent the possibility of Fascist violence.

36 Regent Square, JOHN STRACHEY
London, W.C.1.

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SIR,—My Council express no opinion as to the desirability of holding any counter demonstration to Mosley's meeting in Hyde Park on Sunday next, 9th inst. We are not in any way concerned with the differences of opinion on this point. We shall, as on a previous occasion, have a picked corp of observers moving amongst the crowds inside and outside Hyde Park on Sunday next. This corps of observers will be composed of sound and reliable persons who are not likely to be led away by panic or emotion, and they will include certain eminent public names. They will be furnished with very detailed instructions and their function will be strictly limited to observing the nature of any violence that may occur and the use to which the police may put their powers.

On previous occasions the behaviour of the police has given ground for serious criticism, and it has been obvious that there is a disposition on the part of the authorities to refuse to intervene in Fascist meetings (even when the police themselves have seen evidence of grievous bodily harm being inflicted inside a building) while they have been very ready, even within the last fortnight, to force themselves into perfectly orderly Labour meetings and refuse

to leave when requested by the chairman to do so. It is this partiality on the part of the authorities that gives grave cause for alarm.

RONALD KIDD,
Secretary,
Council for Civil Liberties

3 Dansey Place,
Shaftesbury Avenue, W.1.

[This correspondence is referred to in our leading article.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

## PEACEFUL CHANGE

SIR,—I agree with you entirely that the mutual assistance pacts now proposed by France and the U.S.S.R. must have the effect of "stabilising the *status quo*" in Eastern Europe. That is what they are intended to do. But that is no argument against them, or against Germany joining in. After all, a stable foundation of guaranteed defence against war is the preliminary condition for either "disarmament" or treaty revision. Your remark about the "flaw that may be urged against the whole usage and mechanism of Geneva" seems to show that you fail to appreciate the need for a ground-plan of *international* security before any building of doors to "peaceful change" can be undertaken.

As one who has for years insisted on the need for establishing some permanent organisation for effecting peaceful change (thus making Article 19 of the Covenant operative), I may perhaps point out that treaty revisability is not the same thing as "treaty revision" in the vernacular of the "dissatisfied Powers." The distinction is important, especially as so many English people are still labouring under the delusion that the League is a sort of Gorgon's head obstructing the dynamic processes of international life.

There are in fact two distinct issues, the need for transforming the dictated peace of the Versailles, Saint Germain and Trianon Treaties into an assented settlement and the more fundamental need of providing a permanent and regular procedure, within the League system, of peaceful change. But both presuppose the maximum possible of security against war. Perhaps when this point is grasped over here there may be an end to the sustained opposition to any suggestions of making the League system effective originating in France.

W. HORSFALL CARTER

11 Woronzow Road,
St. John's Wood, N.W.8.

## PRISONS

SIR,—In asking whether my knowledge of prison conditions is up to date, Mr. Harry Roberts cites a paragraph from the Prison Act of 1877 which was superseded by the Act of 1898. The paragraph itself, however, remains substantially unaltered and is translated into administrative action through the Statutory Rules and Orders 1933, No. 809, which took effect on the October 2nd last.

My "one-sided" criticism was obviously directed towards the treatment in remand prisons of the underdog, the man or woman who is unable to purchase those amenities which the Rules allow at a price. Special cells with "suitable" bedding and furniture, relief from cleaning cells and other "unaccustomed duties," food other than normal prison diet, books and newspapers are all only obtainable if the prisoner or his friends can pay for them. Visits from legal advisers are only available for those who can afford a legal adviser, or for the fortunate few who are granted legal aid before trial on indictment. Lay visitors, as I pointed out, are restricted to certain hours, and are limited by the cost of travel to centralised remand prisons, and even then can only be seen through a double 6ft. barricade of ½-inch mesh iron wire, with officers walking about between the barricades.

"There is no restriction on the number of letters a prisoner may write and receive," says Mr. Roberts, and according to the Rules he is correct, with the addendum that all such letters are subject to the Governor's perusal and censorship. But in addition to the Rules there are "Regulations" which are displayed on a card in every remand cell, on which it is stated that only one letter may be written per day, and further that no reference to prison treatment may be made either in a letter or at a visit. Neither of these conditions, incidentally, has the sanction of the Rules as approved by Parliament. Smoking has certainly been recently permitted, as I stated in my last letter, but only at restricted periods.

There are two aspects of Mr. Roberts's remarks which demand comment. First, it must be remembered that it is often a matter of luck—or of police "objection" (a practice which is approaching domination)—as to whether bail is granted or not, and that an accused person on bail has no restrictions placed on his smoking or eating: his letters or visitors are not subject to censorship: he may indulge in "contaminating" company to his heart's content, and he has equal opportunity with the prosecution in rehearsing his defence.

Secondly, serious objection must be taken to the quoted assertion that untried prisoners are "not respectable and probably innocent people, but old hands with, in all probability, quite a string of previous convictions." I believe this is the Home Office view of remand treatment; but a police court, in deciding bail before the case is settled, is supposed by law to be kept in ignorance of an accused's history—how then can the Bench single out for remand prison only those with previous convictions? Further it is well-known that magistrates frequently remand a newcomer in custody just to "larn" him what prison is like in the mistaken impression that they are thereby saving a soul, while others are remanded to prison who have no previous convictions to their debit and who are subsequently acquitted without compensation for loss, as in the recent case of mistaken identity in the North.

There might be some logic in inflicting this penal treatment—with its absolute solitary confinement—if the period so served counted towards a subsequent sentence, although a difficulty would then arise over those who were proved to be innocent, unless perhaps they were compensated or allowed to commit an offence with impunity up to the value of the remand sentence they had served! Surely it should be possible to provide conditions for those denied or unable to obtain bail more akin to internment than to a disciplined prison?

HUGH FRANKLIN

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## THE HERRING RATIONALISED

SIR,—For the first time since 1931 the Government has been given a direct recommendation, by one of its own Commissions, to look beyond restriction-economy and plan for expansion. May I therefore support Mr. Max Nicholson's plea that you should not be too hard on the Herring Report?

Your original comment, that like the other schemes this one aims at eliminating redundant producers, is clearly correct: it is difficult to conceive any other possible first course in present general conditions. But whereas other schemes stop short at organising and limiting production, the Herring Plan links with this a number of commonsense suggestions for widening the market. One says "commonsense": but it is really astonishing how completely the so-called "Marketing" Schemes have hitherto ignored genuine marketing, as that is understood by all those engaged in any modern distributive process. The word properly denotes not the creation of a producers' ring to unload a product on the next man who will buy it, but the whole process of getting it to its ultimate consumer in a form, and by means, and at a price suited to his needs. The Herring Report proposes a marketing policy in this sense. The Commission actually made a study of the consumer as she is instead of basing its plans on the worst abstraction since the Economic Man—the Uneconomic Woman, a fictional housewife who will go on buying the same quantities of milk, bacon and what not, regardless of changes in price. In the course of this study, it discovered what it might not have guessed—that kippers at 4*d.* a pair are too dear for a big fraction of the market, and that the decline in their sale is therefore not wholly a matter of exports and "world causes," but partly of controllable factors at home. Thus the report assumes the elasticity, not the rigidity, of the market—an assumption that experienced marketers know to be 80 per cent. correct: it explicitly envisages the subsequent expansion, not the eternal constriction, of the industry. It aims at some increase in the nation's income, not simply in the producer's.

There has been in the past, Sir, a sad tendency for slips between the initial Reports on primary products and the schemes ultimately put into action. Recommendations other than those directed to the immediate interests of the producer have sometimes been shelved. That is why it is well to emphasise the hopeful and constructive aspects of the Herring Report, and to encourage Ministers, and later Commissions, to take due note of the difference in its underlying principles.

S. C. LESLIE

110 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.2.

P.S.—Incidentally the Report turns its back on the wretched principle of uncontrolled monopoly that has lately been winning

its way in governmental favour—most notably and most indefensibly in the egregious Sugar Scheme that is shortly due for consideration.

## EXAMINATIONS

SIR,—Your contributor "E.P." dismisses somewhat lightly the most practicable alternative to the present system of pass or failure in School Certificate examinations. The alternative is that *every* candidate should receive a certificate taking the form of a simple record of the quality of his achievement in each subject offered by him. The arguments for this alternative are strong:

(1) That it does away with the unjust practice of stamping as failures a number of boys and girls at the immature age of about 16, because they have been unable to pass an examination which is admittedly an inadequate test of capacity to do one's job in life.

(2) It does away with the waste of time and energy in the classroom involved in attempts to force a pupil up to pass standard in subjects for which he has no capacity.

(3) The simple record it supplies of the subjects in which the pupil is good or passable or weak is all that is needed by the employers or the higher educational institute.

The argument against the alternative is, in the words of your contributor, "a risk that such a reform might merely replace the present limitations of the curriculum by vocational specialisation." If this means that in the schools there will arise a tendency towards premature specialisation, the answer is that the argument does scant justice to the intelligence of the headmasters. They would be quite competent to deal with any such development.

SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINER

## A CLASSLESS EDUCATION

SIR,—One reason for the preponderance of certain Universities in Civil Service examination successes does not seem to have been mentioned yet. The more efficient our public scholarship system, the more likely it is that a boy of very great ability will reach those universities whose prestige, rightly or wrongly, stands highest. Of the candidates from Oxford and Cambridge, many have come from day-schools, including county and municipal schools, and some began their education in the elementary schools. I agree with "Middle Class" that the widest possible range is desirable, but we should not overlook the fact that the widening has already begun, and is one result of changes which are deeply affecting Oxford and Cambridge themselves.

"Middle Class" dealt in his letter with a second subject—the appointments to administrative and inspectorial posts in the educational system. He feels that experience of elementary-school teaching is not given its proper weight at present when these appointments are made. My own experience, which has been much concerned with filling training-college posts, may perhaps be relevant here. I always felt that a period of responsible service in an elementary school was a very great asset in a candidate; when we tried to look for it in combination with the other assets that we needed, the field was apt to shrink into something disappointingly small. For instance, we nearly always needed a graduate with evidence of good intellect and sound learning, and of personal qualities that would carry weight with older pupils. Such a person, until the last few years, could have counted on obtaining posts in secondary schools. It takes rather exceptional decision in youth either to reject this in favour of the elementary field, or to turn after a few years from the secondary to the elementary; and such decision (a fine and desirable quality in itself) is found rarely and is not always found in conjunction with other requisites that may be essential for the post under consideration.

The most hopeful part of the field might consist of candidates who for financial reasons had taught for a few years before taking a degree. But here again every increase of efficiency in the scholarship system (including the four-year grants for intending teachers) will make the suitable candidate harder to find.

Girton College, Cambridge. H. M. WODEHOUSE

## A BYZANTINE CHRIST

SIR,—Surely Mr. Fleming is wrong. It was John Morley and not Joseph Chamberlain who originally referred to Christ as "the mystic of the Galilean hills." DAVID FREEMAN

3 Cleve Road, N.W.6.

## THE CENSOR AGAIN

SIR,—The article in your issue of August 18th covers a great deal of ground, and with its conclusions most people will agree. There are, however, one or two points upon which the article did not touch. The majority of English people require protection from shock, and the censorship protects them, well and good. But why should the minority have to belong to a club and have to see uncensored plays at "private" performances staged on inconvenient days and at inconvenient times? Surely plays could easily be divided into two classes, the censored and the uncensored, somewhat on the lines of films, which (although all of them are censored) are divided into "A" films for grown ups and "universal" films for everybody. If this were done an uncensored play should by law be advertised as such, and anybody, thus warned, would attend at his or her peril and should have no cause for complaint if shocked. The attendance of the young at uncensored plays could, if thought fit, be prohibited. We now come to another point, and this applies to uncensored plays as now "privately" performed. Is there any censorship at all of uncensored plays or are members of clubs who see such plays supposed to be entirely and completely unshockable? If there is some limit to their shockability, what is the limit? And have the police the right to be present at and/or prevent uncensored performances and, if so, in what circumstances? Perhaps somebody can answer these questions for us. Probably complete nudity, physiological details and the lowest sexual slang should be prohibited; apart from this there should be no interference. Owing to the hole-and-corner way in which uncensored plays have to be performed at present it is very difficult to gauge the demand for such plays. One cannot help feeling that this liability to shock on the part of English playgoers is really only a pose and with censored and uncensored plays running side by side would probably disappear. G. W. R. THOMSON

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Beckenham, Kent.

# Miscellany

## ARBITER PERIGRINATIONUM

IT cannot be denied that a certain amount of snobbery is sometimes to be found clinging, hidden below the water-line, to reminiscences of foreign travel. In this attitude of sinful pride those who have been privileged so to indulge themselves have been supported if not abetted by the guide-books and—subtly, enchantingly but undeniably and principally—by the prince among them, Karl Baedeker.

Beginning as their servant, he grew to be very like their master. Indeed, he has reigned as the Arbiter of Taste in Travel for many years over travellers in every land, displaying a mastery of snob-requirements and a sensitiveness to snob-values—delighting even to discover them where none were before—both indispensable and unsurpassed. His praise is graded no less finely than his gratuities, and this delicacy of judgment is equalled only by that of his intuitions of the attitude expected of him by his readers, whether amusement, condescension, admiration or rapture.

Art, food, inhabitants, scenery, customs, and climate, all and each receive their *mot juste*; none of them defies description or measurement by the standard of depreciation or praise. Everybody and everything have their place in an order which one feels is the creation of a mind moulded before the Origin of Species or the Emancipation of the Serfs.

The carelessness of Karl's rapture and the measure of his praise are calculated equally with a scrupulousness and a self-control that no feat of Man, no upheaval of Nature, could ever induce him to forget. It is not impossible for a picture or a mountain to be "truly magnificent," an altar to be "gorgeously enriched"; but with the next breath decorum is restored. The church is an "unpretentious structure"; its courtyard is "quaint"; and the landscape, innocent of all pretensions to a star, is lucky if it is "worth a visit in fine weather."

But if he orders Nature he condescends to Man. A station restaurant is " tolerable " ; worse, " the Osterie (wine-shops) are the paradise of the lower classes." Nor do hewers of wood alone get a short shrift. Neither artists nor even " Masters " are exempt. One is " a man of limited gifts, which he cultivated with ability " ; another was " initiated into the secrets of perspective " ; and " the endeavours " of a third " to overcome the defects of his native school " may or may not have been " crowned with success."

But before we deliver ourselves unconditionally into the custody of this imposing mentor of our cultural life, let us seek his opinions on matters more familiar to us. When we find that to his eyes the Albert Memorial is " magnificent " and receives a " *star* " ; that the exterior of the Albert Hall is " tastefully ornamented in coloured brick " ; but that Wren's towers at Westminster Abbey are " unpleasing and incongruous " ; may not the faintest scepticism soften hereafter the fervour of our reverence for the majesty and ease, the positiveness, almost the impatience, of this Headmaster's *obiter dicta* ?

Nothing is too macabre or bizarre, nothing too tremendous or trivial for this protean imagination, eternally capable of enthusiasm and restraint, purple patches and pedantry, pomposity and bathos. There is the saint, for instance, of whom it is said " Her corpse is shewn ; gratuity " ; and that " fine mosaic pavement " [in St. Paul's] which " was executed by female convicts from Woking " ! Then again there is " the *Fly*," which, we are told, " is a vehicle of superior description and is admitted to the parks more freely than the cabs " !

Let us penetrate—in a Fly—into those arcana of social bliss.

> The scene in this part of Hyde Park, on fine afternoons, is most interesting and imposing, though of late years the fashionable throng has not been so great. In the Drive are seen elegant equipages and high-bred horses in handsome trappings, moving continually to and fro, presided over by sleek coachmen and powdered lackeys, and occupied by some of the most beautiful and exquisitely dressed women in the world. In the Row are numerous riders, who parade their spirited and glossy steeds before the admiring crowd sitting and walking at the sides. . . . A refreshing contrast to the fashionable show is afforded by a scene of a very unsophisticated character, which takes place in summer on the Serpentine before 8 a.m. and after 8 p.m. At these times, when a flag is hoisted, a crowd of men and boys, most of them in very homely attire, are to be seen undressing and plunging into the water, where their lusty shouts and hearty laughter testify to their enjoyment. After the lapse of an hour the flag is lowered, as an indication that the bathing time is over, and in a quarter of an hour every trace of the lively scene has disappeared.

What an epitome of Karl's style, his personality, of—as he himself would have expressed it—his *Weltanschauung* ! Poverty and the lower orders possess for him a certain quaintness, which, however, does not prevent his regarding affluence and aristocracy as younger sisters to the Scarlet Woman, even although he describes them with relish and caters for them with care. His spiritual centre of gravity is the middle class ; at any rate they are his principal audience. For them, after disposing of the " *Public House* " and the Ritz, he includes the Boarding Houses of Bloomsbury, and mentions—a unique feature—the proprietor of each establishment by name. Rare privilege ! Appreciated to the full, one hopes, by Mrs. Snell and Mrs. Kelly, by Mrs. Jetley, Jane Hawgood and Mrs. Mull. What, however, was the subtle distinction between the two gentlemen proprietors, C. Parkinson and *Mr.* Althouse, must remain for ever a tantalising mystery.

In Karl's post-war editions many of the quaintnesses have disappeared, and with them some of the enchantment. No longer are the art-galleries of the world visited to the accompaniment of religious *obbligato* by George Eliot and Ruskin, although even now are we deprived of our Essay on Political Development, or History of North German Art, still, as always, masterpieces of compression. And nothing has been able to make any impression on the sedate Victorian style ; nothing, it is to be hoped, ever will, enshrining, as it does, a *Times*-ian dignity all its own, coupling the old-fashioned manner with the most modernised contents, and successfully effecting among " Routes from London " the demure inclusion of " Air-services and Aerodromes." How mixed would have been the feelings of Karl the First : Incredulity and Pride ! Insistence on the up to date, yet warranted reliable !

Yes ; the style and the essential man remain the same. Even in the year nineteen hundred and thirty " ladies are advised to eschew the Corso on the chief days of the Carnival." Walls are never " covered " with frescoes ; they are " embellished " or " adorned." We still enter an " edifice " through " portals " ; and in the interior " spirited " statues (" some, alas, sadly damaged ! ") " rise " on all hands. The view is " pleasing," the situation " lofty," and we always " quit " the country which has " merited " a visit. " Nello " decoration, sgraffito, and " putti " monstrances, podiums, stylobates, and spandrels abound. Art is his playground, esoteric historical allusion is his relaxation. Nothing lies outside the scope of his learning or the orbit of his interest—philology, geology, anthropology, religion. Yet there appears to be one exception—botany.* Nowhere does Karl mention, either with rapture or with learning, the flowers of the country he is describing. Do the gentle things make no appeal to him ? Or does he not believe that they would interest his readers ? What an error of judgment ! And what a missed opportunity for expert display !

It would be a pleasant triumph to persuade the Herr Verleger that it is as delightful and as useful to learn that wild cyclamen and grape-hyacinths and stars of Bethlehem and periwinkles (or if he prefers it, cyclamen, muscarus, ornithogalum, and vinca) may be gathered all together in the woods of Tuscany in April as it is to know that " the railway leaves the pliocene clay for the hummocky uplands," or that there is " tertiary marl below the tufa."

RICHARD PYKE

## EVENINGS AT THE PROMENADES

A GREAT improvement is noticeable in the playing of the orchestra at the Promenades this year. It is most conspicuous in the strings, which have ceased, even when playing Bach, to saw ponderously away like so many cast-iron sewing machines. The orchestra gives me the impression of being generally fresher and less exhausted than in previous years. No doubt this B.B.C. orchestra is still overworked. It is difficult to get non-musical people to understand that an orchestra is not like a machine in a mass-production factory that can run on indefinitely with no variation in efficiency until it is nearing the stage of being worn-out, when it can easily be replaced by another machine and perhaps a better one.

It takes many years of playing together to make a first-class orchestra, and overwork is one of the chief causes of bad habits. Once an orchestra gets into bad habits it is extremely difficult for it to get rid of them. Everybody recognises the necessity of careful discipline and training in any game if the player is to avoid forming those fatal habits which will certainly prevent his attaining to any real mastery unless they are got rid of. But an orchestral player is doing something far more difficult and complicated than any tennis or billiards player ; the strain, muscular and nervous, is far greater because the physical technique is used for a more complex purpose in which the emotions and the intellect are involved. I have always maintained that the B.B.C. needs two first-class orchestras of about a hundred musicians each, and the important work should be divided between them. Neither of these orchestras should be used for the ordinary hack studio work, for there is plenty of other work for them to do with the Promenades, the regular Symphony Concerts and the annual London Musical Festival. Also the B.B.C. should frequently send one of its two first-class symphony orchestras touring the provinces and also making visits abroad as the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic and the New York Philharmonic orchestras do.

This season some of the Promenade concerts have been

* I am indebted to Dr. R. W. B. Ellis for pointing out this fact.

very enjoyable. The playing of Mozart's *Divertimento No. 2 in D* (K 131) one evening last week was a good example of the improvement in lightness and elasticity of the strings. Sir Henry Wood is playing his part in this by giving the orchestra its head a little more than he used to do. One of Sir Henry's great virtues is his vitality; he never gets slack and he is never indecisive, but is always on the mark. But he has spent so much time in the past drilling imperfect orchestras that sometimes he would underline the obvious to a degree that was maddening to an experienced auditor. Now that he has an orchestra with material of the quality of the present B.B.C. orchestra he is getting and will get still better results by leaving more to the players at the concerts, for he has the rehearsals in which to make his ideas clear.

Besides, from a rhythmic point of view an orchestra must feel itself moving if it is to get the best results. A conductor at a concert should evoke rather than provoke the performance of the orchestra. It is a sign of the unusual vitality of Sir Henry Wood that even to-day he is not standing still, but is developing in subtlety and elasticity without losing any of his admirable directness.

Another improved feature of the Proms this year is the singing. I consider there is very little good singing to be heard in England. It is, of course, a common complaint abroad as well as in this country that more singers are turned out half-trained and half-baked than ever before. Those optimists who cheerfully believe in a universal progress would do well to study the history of the art of singing during the past hundred years. Every musician will agree that the standard of singing has strikingly declined even within living memory; but this decline is small compared with the general decline since the end of the eighteenth century. There are many people who can remember a singer named Battistini, though most of them only heard him (as I did) when he was an old man. I believe he is still alive, but he must be nearly eighty years old. The point is that Battistini was a survivor of the old school, and I do not know of anybody to-day who is comparable to him. A famous singer like Gigli is not to be mentioned in the same breath. Most English singers have not the least conception of the *technique* of singing. They literally warble their native wood-notes wild and the more they warble the worse they get. As for the *art* of singing, well that is news from nowhere to them. They don't know there is any art in it; their talk is all about voices: "He has a lovely voice" or "She has a lovely voice." I have heard that remark made hundreds of times by singers of other singers, as if it were the ultimate praise instead of being the mere rudiment with which you begin. Nobody should even start to learn singing unless he has "a lovely voice." Actually many of these lovely voices when you hear them are enough to make a cat weep with jealousy.

But there has been recently some slight improvement in English singing. Miss Joan Cross, Miss Mary Jarred, Miss Isobel Baillie and Mr. Keith Falkner have all sung at the Promenades during the past few weeks, and have sung well. For one thing—and it is a great merit—you can hear all their words; they are not afraid of consonants; they are not afraid of a bold, clear articulation; they do not mince or mouth or gasp for breath and they seem to understand what they are singing. Also there was a very pleasant surprise for those of us who went to hear Beethoven's song cycle, *An die ferne Geliebte*. The vocalist, Mr. Percy Manchester, was a name unknown to me, but his singing gave me much pleasure. He has a nice voice, good diction, and musical sensibility. Also, he has some technique and managed his voice more like a good instrumentalist than like the average singer. I had anticipated having to leave my seat during the performance of *An die ferne Geliebte* because it is more than one can endure to hear this exquisite work massacred in the thousand and one ways in which English singers have acquired the art of destroying songs. Therefore I am very grateful to Mr. Percy Manchester for having given me the opportunity of hearing this favourite work of mine once more all through.

Of the instrumental soloists Miss Alma Moodie, who played the Tchaikovsky and the Beethoven violin concertos, has given me most pleasure. The first thing that strikes one about Miss Alma Moodie's playing is that we are hearing a soundly trained violinist with a solid technique as well as an artist of thorough musicianship. So many executive musicians fail ever to give adequate expression to their gifts for lack of the best and most thorough training. One feels this lack in most English violinists, but not in Miss Alma Moodie.

The practice of giving one-composer nights seems to grow. We have had Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Strauss and Sibelius nights as well as the regular Wagner and Beethoven programmes. I think this is a bad principle. These one-composer programmes should be kept for special occasions, such as the celebration of Strauss's seventieth birthday this year, which was the legitimate excuse for the Strauss evening at the "Proms" last week. Incidentally, it revealed the fact that Strauss's music is not wearing at all badly. Certainly there is nothing in it for the modern composer, as there still is in the case of greater masters, but it is a complete expression of a period achieved with an ease and mastery that have no contemporary rival.

W. J. TURNER

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

### "Ces Messieurs de la Santé"

Raimu must be one of the two or three best European film-actors, and *Ces Messieurs de la Santé*, now showing at the Academy Cinema in Oxford Street, is undoubtedly the most amusing film that has reached London for several years. The story is that of a financier, suspected—unjustly, it turns out—of crooked dealings, who escapes from the Santé prison and takes refuge in a little corset-shop under the arcades of the Palais Royal, where an ex-mistress is employed as *première vendeuse*. He obtains a job as night-watchman; from watchman and man-of-all-work, he advances to the position of Napoleonic sales-manager and, after hypnotising the *patronne* by a display of financial genius, he raises his employer, her lack-lustre son and her pretty and discontented daughter-in-law to heights of affluence and publicity of which they had never dreamed. Then he sets up on his own account as a Parisian banker; in the end, he divulges his real identity to the police—but it is only in order to be able to stage a further financial coup; his stocks crash and, since he knows that they are in themselves perfectly sound and that the original charges against him have long ago been abandoned, we catch a last glimpse of him, in his cell among flowers and champagne, ordering a Jewish second-in-command to buy them up again from the speculators at cost-price.

The result is a cynical but engaging picture. Raimu himself, as the financier who is half Gascon and half Marseillais and possesses the social and oratorical gifts of both districts, dominates the screen with an exuberance that is both delightful and slightly disconcerting. He is well supported by other members of the cast. *Ces Messieurs de la Santé* is an extravaganza on the theme of financial genius, but it is also a satire on the life of the *petit commerçant*, the miserly *patronne* and her devoted book-keeper, Monsieur Amédée. The film has all the charm of Réné Clair, but none of the whimsicality that is sometimes associated with Clair's productions.

## THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, September 7th—
Promenade Concerts, Queen's Hall, 8 nightly, except Sunday.
Conway Forum: Gerald Heard on "Psychology, Nationalism and Social Service," Conway Hall, 7.30.

SATURDAY, September 8th—
"Rose and Glove," Westminster Theatre.

SUNDAY, September 9th—
C. Delisle Burns on "Education for Peace," Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, September 10th—
"Young England," Victoria Palace.

WEDNESDAY, September 12th—
International Building Trades Exhibition, Olympia, till September 26th.

THURSDAY, September 13th—
"Eden End," Duchess Theatre.

# Current Literature

## BOOKS IN GENERAL

INTELLIGENCE and independence seem to blossom in military men, as they do in many women, late in life, and much the same reasons can be discovered for the late development of the clever and cranky half-pay colonel as for the growing intelligence of the woman who has said good-bye, some years since, to her last lover. In the type of whom I speak (and there is, of course, its opposite), both the colonel and the elderly lady are disinterested persons who have escaped from the slavery of a life-time of ambition; their intrigues for place, power and precedence are over, and they realise with pleasure that for the last dozen or twenty years of life they can settle down to enjoy themselves sensibly, in being themselves. After fifty or sixty years, they have at last got free of institutions and time-tables: have got time to turn round and leisure to think. Prejudices cling to them, but even these are slowly shed as the petals of their minds open. A greater social fault than prejudice is intellectual modesty: it is general with them, and difficult to be overcome even for the patient listener exciting their enthusiasm. England is full of these autumn flowers; we know them best by chance meeting and from books.

* * *

Such a charming companion is now revealed, as seems to have been his wish, after a century and a half, with the publication of the Torrington Diaries, edited by C. Bruyn Andrews (Eyre and Spottiswoode, Vol. I, 18*s*.).

The Hon. John Byng, who became Viscount Torrington for the last fortnight of his life, was a nephew of that unfortunate Admiral who perished "pour encourager les autres," an example which did not deter his relatives from entering the ungrateful service of their sovereign. After twenty years in the Army, during which he rose to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, Byng retired and entered the Civil Service. In his own words:

> His early days were spent in camps, his latter days were passed at Stamps.

But even his duties at Somerset House left him with abundant leisure, and his curiosity to see England led him to make a series of tours. His wife would set out to visit a watering place such as Cheltenham, Malvern or Weymouth, and he would ride down from London on his horse, with his dog following footsore behind him. Often he would turn aside from the turnpike roads to visit an ancient abbey, a Roman antiquity or a great house that lay near his route. His diaries are filled with precise observations of the places he visited and the people he met, and pasted among their leaves are water colours by himself, billheads of theatrical entertainments, and advertisements and bills of inns. These have been reproduced in the text, and many of them, such as the advertisment of Weymouth Regatta, have great typographical charm. Two points in the production of the book must be noticed. The author's use of capitals has not been preserved: thus *Birds Gardens*, shown in a facsimile leaf of the diary, is printed on page 45 as *birds gardens*: in this case it is obvious that the meaning has suffered, as we see from a billhead, which has been pasted in announcing a public tea drinking at *William Bird's, at Henwich Hall, Admittance to the Gardens, one shilling each person.* In the second place, the editorial notes are inconveniently placed, being printed in each case directly after the tour to which they refer.

* * *

Colonel Byng is most interesting when one is travelling the same roads and stopping at the same inns, or when he describes the places one knows intimately. For this reason I am looking forward with special interest to volumes 2 and 3, which give accounts of tours through Huntingdonshire and Bedfordshire and to the North. Wherever he goes he takes with him three prejudices—his first, of indignation at the neglect of church services in the second half of the eighteenth century, scarcely concerns us to-day. But though one may share the prejudice expressed, one has to laugh as one reads the following passage:

> As for what I should wish to find, viz., country manners and civil simplicity, I fear I was born fifty years too late; as the travellers and the turnpike roads, have now introduced contemptuous insolence, with every courtlike vice nor do I expect to find the former boasted cheapness of distant concealments where heretofore content and comforts dwelt together undisturbed by the crowd of exploring strangers who now visit to vex every corner of the isle.

If that was true in 1784, all one can say is that it is truer now. But most probably it has never been true. His third prejudice was a hatred of the watering places where his valetudinarian womenfolk enjoyed themselves.

> All these places quickly tire with me; for as soon as the novelty ceases, they sink into sameness, and tediousness; perhaps they may well suit the flirt, or the fortune hunter, but the endless flurry must turn men of a quiet turn frantic. . . . My chief trouble arises from living in the midst of powder, perfumes, caps, hats, gloves, gauze and petticoats; of which the cost and profusion no batchelor can, or should have, the smallest idea. . . . All my ladies were so fatigued by the *toil* of the day that they hurried home to bed; a most precious, nervous set, encouraging one another in sickness, and fancies; never drinking one glass of wine, or daring to move but by the advice of the doctor. The maids, in imitation of their mistresses, fall sick likewise, and complain bitterly of their bad breath!!

He is not often so querulous. Chelmsford and Malvern were bad; Weymouth was only rendered tolerable for a few days by the company of Edmund Malone, by mackerel fishing and by exploring Maiden Castle. But there were worse places still.

> Brighton appeared in a fashionable, unhappy bustle, with such a harpy set of painted harlots, as to appear to me as bad as Bond Street in the spring, at 3 o'clock p.m.

* * *

What he liked best of all was to ride along a bridle-way planning an excursion for his ladies—for he had picnics constantly in view.

> The way to enjoy Tintern Abbey properly and at leisure, is to bring wines, cold meat, with corn for the horses; (bread, beer, cyder and commonly salmon may be procured from the Beaufort Arms); spread your table in the ruins; and possibly a Welsh harper may be procured from Chepstow.

Mother Ludlam's hole near Farnborough is "much the best place I ever saw for a cold collation on a summer's day." He dislikes the new landscape gardening and beautifying of the country and has a hatred of the conifers which were only just being planted in his day, to the ruination of Southern England in ours.

* * *

His taste in inns was particularly good, and naturally he speaks much of them. Often indeed his words are as true to-day as when they were written.

> I do not believe in the county of Sussex there are any such excellent inns as the Haycock at Wanderford Bridge.

Yet he preferred humbler places than The Haycock, enjoying "the habit of ale-houses and we might soon become downright trampers." He liked to share the dinner of the people of the house, of mutton and boiled turnips, to find a farmer travelling in the same direction with whom he could talk as they rode. Of his own diary he says:

> This journal appears to me (as it must to any reader) one heap of egotism and tautology; I am bewildered in . . . I rode, I went, I . . .

Yet though he is no Arthur Young gathering statistics on his tours, his picture of England has real historical value, and he himself is a most delightful companion who, writing for his own pleasure, had absolutely no airs and affectations.

* * *

I find that *English Country*, which I reviewed on this page last week, does not actually appear until September 10th. I apologise to the publishers, Messrs. Wishart, for having made a mistake about the date, and to any readers who may have tried to obtain a copy of the book.

DAVID GARNETT

# NEW NOVELS

**The Treasure of the Sierra Madre.** By B. TRAVEN. *Chatto and Windus.* 7s. 6d.

**The Disinherited.** By JACK CONROY. *Wishart.* 7s. 6d.

**Earmarked for Hell.** By RAMON J. SENDER. *Wishart.* 7s. 6d.

**The Curate's Wife.** By E. H. YOUNG. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.

*The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* is the story of a search for gold in the mountains of Mexico. It is first of all an exciting piece of adventure, but under Herr Traven's treatment it becomes considerably more than this. It does not stop at sending a series of electric shocks into the reader's nervous system, but goes on to possess the whole of him, awakening him to wonder at the spectacle of humanity. Books of the first order have this power to suggest a concealed allegorical or symbolical context, without ever stating it. The ground has been cleared of all irrelevance. A test case has been made. It may be that we have no right to read such meanings into a book; but the fact that we cannot help doing so is proof of the novelist's success.

The merits of Herr Traven's narrative arise from his ability to domesticate his imagination in unusual country. This is the rarest of gifts. Domestication was the essence of Defoe's achievement in *Robinson Crusoe:* he reconstructed the everday life of an ordinary man under extraordinary conditions. Anyone can imagine the latter; it takes a master to present the former. Herr Traven's quality reminds me of Defoe's. He shows his search for gold, with its accompaniment of fear, suspicion, murder and robbery, not as something Romantic with pedal down and full chorus but as something which can occur in the context of ordinary everyday life. A man who commits a murder, for example, is not, in romantic capitals, The Murderer, with the blood roaring in his ears and the orchestra at full gallop but—far more sinister—a man who has a great many things to arrange under unexpected emotional difficulty. The insistence on the sound and fury in a situation is usually the measure of a novelist's inability to imagine what really happened—in short he has failed to domesticate an imagination gone wastefully wild.

Herr Traven's characters have also, what is rare in stories of adventure, a social background. One is told what sort of community has produced them. He knows the appalling world of the Mexican underdog completely. If there were no story the book would stand as a fascinating record of travel.

Dobb is a poor white living in a doss-house near Vera Cruz, picking up rather less than a living mainly by begging. (There is an astonishingly documented description of this place where the "hall-porter" notes especially the trousers of the residents, and is able to stop anyone at once if they attempt to make off with someone else's.) Dobb wanders off to the oilfields in search of a job. He fails, and returns. Then he discovers he has won a small sum in the lottery, and this he invests in a few tools and departs on a search for gold in the mountains. Howard, an experienced, disillusioned old digger, knows the place. Curtin, another white man, goes too. Hitherto, Herr Traven has been content to contrast the despair of the underdog in a country of plenty with the greedy complacency of the company directors who are making millions out of oil and other raw materials. Now he turns his light upon the underdogs who also are out to get rich quick. No friendship exists between the men. They discover the mine in a remote part of the mountains. They slave as they have never slaved before. They save one another's lives. They drive off a gang of bandits; but they remain, apart from the bond of their work, quite unmoved by one another and uninterested. In any case they are naturally inarticulate. The time comes, at last, for them to go off with their treasure. They go by a circuitous route to avoid the police. The old man is obliged to stay behind for a period of weeks in an Indian village, and the other two go on promising to bank his share. But the society which has divided the community into exploiters and exploited has killed the moral sense in Dobbs. Of what use is a moral sense on the starvation line? The gold he has got is not, for him, the result of work. It is a stroke of luck. He proposes they make off with the old man's share. Curtin objects. He does not mind stealing gold, he says, but he cannot steal labour. Dobbs pretends that Curtin argues in this fashion because he is planning to murder him and take all three shares. The donkeys amble under their loads, and the two white men walk beside them knowing that soon there will be murder. The ensuing crime is the climax of a psychological struggle which has been presented with the coolest subtlety. Herr Traven has worked and worked upon this situation until he has got down to the nerve strings of the inevitable. Although he writes coldly and laconically and with a certain bitterness at the disgusting greed of the new world, he is neither too brutal nor too subtle, and he is certainly not cynical. At the very end, indeed, I think he softens too much. After enduring the second murder by the mestizos, we are prepared to face any further cruelty either of attitude or fact. A book so cool and exact in its course through violence is rare. We have been subjected to muscle-mysticism, undergraduate worship of strong men, attempts at being the Dostoevsky of the wide open spaces or the Irish bog. In the wide open spaces where men are men it is a pleasure to find an author with the intelligence and imagination to tell us which men are which. *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* is the most impressive novel I have read this year.

To judge by quotations on the jacket of Mr. Conroy's novel, we are about to suffer a great deal of nonsense about politics in literature. We are apparently to have a horrible thing called "the proletarian novel" all about wicked capitalists and good, strong, clean-limbed workers. Snobbery and ignorance of the nature of literature account for this stuff. Mr. Conroy's novel is better than the hysteria of his sponsors suggests. It describes life in a small, backward mining town in America, and how a miner's son leaves the place to work in factories. He goes to Detroit in the boom, and comes down to the starvation line in the slump. Mr. Conroy can write. He can make vivid pictures of places and people. Seen within the narrow limits of their relation to their work, they are well observed. One reads to the end. But what remains? Has one been converted to the Cause? Does one shout "There ought to be a law"? Does one's breast burn with indignation? Alas for the proletarian novel—that estimable product—although it shows men at work, one job is like another, and to make his catalogue a whole and give it a significance is beyond Mr. Conroy. By all means let us show men conditioned by their jobs, but let us also see jobs conditioned by men, and that there are other conditionings besides these. The moral seems to be that novelists who desire the dictatorship of the proletariat should forget about it. Critics with political bees in their bonnets are bad counsellors. Herr Traven's non-proletarian novel could start ten revolutions to Mr. Conroy's one.

Señor Sender's *Earmarked for Hell*—not, I suspect, the English of *Iman*, the title under which the book first appeared in Spain—is not strictly a novel but a novelised account of the author's experiences in the Moroccan War, especially around the disaster at Anual in 1921. This disaster made an enormous impression upon public opinion and it played a part in the overthrow of the monarchy. The book has therefore the interest of uncovering the mind of the Spanish soldier-peasant about these events. As literature the book has dignity but no great distinction, and the attempt to create a symbolical Spanish soldier type is not very successful. Human beings may achieve symbolical greatness, but they collapse under it when it is thrust upon them. Suppose, for example, that Cervantes had stressed every few pages the significance of Sancho Panza! Señor Sender has some excellent passages of macabre humour; he has the admirable gravity of Ludwig Renn. It would be a pity if, after our glut of war books, this intelligent and sensitive Spanish document were put aside.

Social conscience is awake in each of these three writers, and, in all, to their advantage. In Miss Young we have a novelist who has remained outside such interests. For her the novel is what it was for Jane Austen: gossip elevated to the plane of art. But there is no sophistication in Miss Young's gossip, and, by virtue of our social puritanism and our psychological dialect, we ought to find her work slow, old-fashioned and, as the phrase goes, unaware. I do not find it so. *The Curate's Wife* continues the story of *Jenny Wren* and improves upon it. Jenny, the prig, artist and snob, the sensitive romantic, is contrasted further with the shrewder, gayer, more vital and realistically minded Dahlia. Miss Young excels, as the best women novelists always do excel, in such differentiations of character, and her firm but just realism is an excellent medium. Her provincial town is not a literary property nor a cathedral antique shop, but like the good little bourgeois marriage it is *ni beau ni laid, ni bon ni mauvais;* on the other hand her caustic tongue and the wit of her dialogue prevent her people from becoming mawkish blurs of the shabby genteel. She understands the odd links which bind people in their relationships, and she gives continual pleasure by allowing her people not only the defects of their virtues—but what is rarer, the virtues corresponding to their defects.

V. S. PRITCHETT.

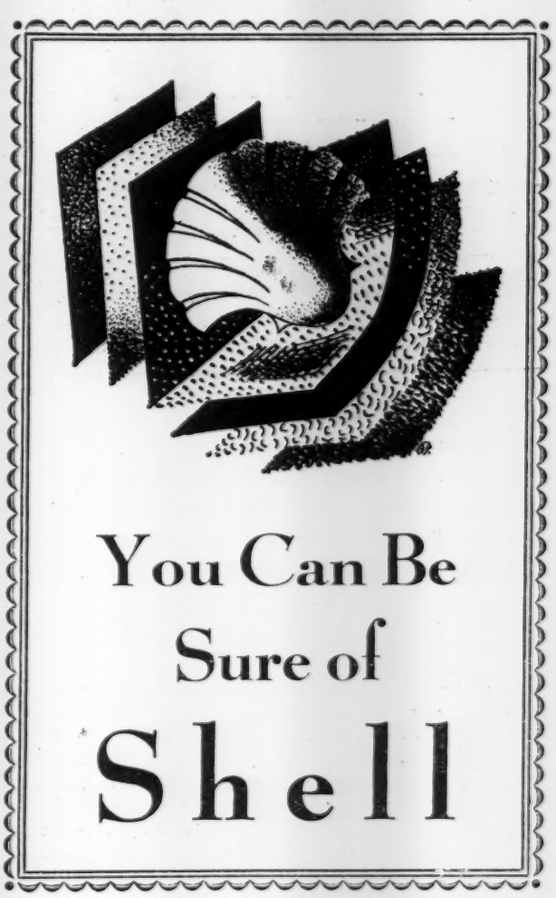
# HISTORY WITHOUT COMMENT

**A Short History of Our Times.** By J. A. SPENDER. *Cassell.* 10s. 6d.

In an age when history is often distorted to illustrate some fantastic hypothesis, or else plastered with an Oriental exuberance of imagery and epigram, Mr. Spender has been content with an austere statement of the facts. A Liberal publicist of great distinction, the friend and confidant of some of the most important statesmen of his time, he has himself played a part in many of the events he records, yet throughout this book he preserves the appearance of an astonishing impartiality. I doubt if it contains one statement to which a Tory or a Socialist could reasonably object. However, the book is not quite so unbiassed as it seems, for sometimes Mr. Spender skilfully omits to consider facts which as a loyal supporter of the Liberal Imperialists he might find disagreeable. He skates gracefully, for instance, over the inconsistency of Grey's attitude to the Entente. If the German plan of campaign had not entailed the invasion of Belgium, Grey's reputation as a statesman was wrecked. He had categorically declared that we were under no obligation to support France in war, yet he held that we were in honour bound to do so. So casuistical a distinction in the realm of foreign politics between honour and obligation would imply mere hypocrisy in an intelligent foreigner, but what psychologists call the *limen* of the unconscious is so high in most Englishmen that the noblest characters can avoid letting their left hand know what their right hand is doing. Mr. Spender does discuss whether the British Government could have averted the war by declaring that they would fight by the side of France, and decides that the state of public opinion in the Cabinet, the House, and the country made this impossible. Also "it would have left Great Britain exposed to the charge of having encouraged the war-makers on the side whose causes she had espoused." But Grey for years had been concealing from the Cabinet the extent of his commitments; and at the crisis, he could, with no greater unscrupulousness, have told Germany and Austria that we should fight, and France and Russia that we should remain neutral. This might have averted the war, and at worst could hardly have led to anything worse than his own resignation. But the trickery entailed would have been conscious, and therefore quite foreign to a simple and high-minded Englishman. Admittedly, democratic government makes foreign policy difficult to conduct, and in the face of the ambition and stupidity of Germany war sooner or later was certainly difficult to avoid. If we had definitely allied ourselves with France and Russia, as high officials at the Foreign Office desired, it would have been almost impossible to restrain Russian aggressiveness. On the other hand, we had little reason (much less certainly than we have now) for rejecting the policy of "splendid" isolation. The Boer War had made us painfully conscious of the dislike with which we were generally regarded, but the Boer War had ended without our being attacked, so that the zone of acute danger was already passed when we sought asylum in the Entente. This alarmist policy was largely due to the frantic resistance of the rich to what now seems mild taxation. In fact, we were rich enough both to carry out large social reforms and to keep a supreme navy. It is amusing to be reminded by Mr. Spender's book of the proposals in Mr. Lloyd George's 1909 Budget which were considered by the Conservatives to be ruinous spoliation—a graduated income-tax from 9*d.* to 1*s.* 2*d.*, a super-tax on incomes over £5,000, death-duties rising to a maximum of 10 per cent. on estates over £200,000, and taxes on undeveloped land and unearned increment. The folly of the Lords in supposing that they could with impunity prevent Liberal Governments from realising any important part of the programme which had given them their majority now seems almost incredible. Indeed, the chief impression left by the story of these years is of human folly, the folly especially of English Conservatives, of German statesmen, and of experts, whether military, naval or economic.

Throughout the period, 1886 to 1932, the Conservative party played a miserable part. First they landed us in the Boer War, squalid in its causes, incompetent in its conduct, and resulting in what its makers least desired, the government of the whole of South Africa by the Dutch. Then they created the Entente, a policy which combined the disadvantages both of an alliance and of isolation. Next they wrecked the power of the House of Lords by absurdly overworking it. And, finally, by their treasonable threats of civil war to oppose Home Rule, they encouraged the Germans to believe that we were impotent, thus precipitating the war as well as setting a fashion in domestic violence which has since been very generally followed. The Germans, again—diplomatic history contains no example of folly greater than theirs during these years. It required almost a miracle to throw this country into the arms of Russia, and they achieved it, thus leaving themselves subservient to their less clumsy, but even more reckless, Austrian allies. Finally, the experts. Mr. Spender points out the capital importance of the Schlieffen plan in the reckless Austro-German diplomacy of the days immediately preceding the war. The military experts were certain that they could conquer France before this country could intervene effectively. This was the first mistake. The second was "the unanimous assurance of the naval and military staffs that England would be brought to her knees within three months" if the integral submarine campaign was authorised. The result was to bring not England to her knees, but America to her feet. And then, on the Allied side, the refusal to recognise the enormous advantage of the defensive over the offensive in trench warfare. If the generals had not squandered our resources in unsuccessful attacks in the West, "side-shows" in the East would almost certainly have brought a quicker victory. As a Frenchman said, war nowadays is too serious a matter to be left to soldiers. Finally, the folly of the economists—Lord Cunliffe, the Governor of the Bank of England, gaily certifying that the Germans could pay in reparations £24,000,000,000. This record of folly among the men in power is contemporaneous with some of the most remarkable intellectual achievements of the human race. But it is uninspiring to the historian. Instead of policies based upon antagonisms of race or religion or political ideals, he finds the Powers driven only by greed and fear, and changing their groupings like children at hide-and-seek.

It is a part of the historian's function to point a moral and adorn a tale. But Mr. Spender in his fear of seeming controversial has refused to be critical. He has carried his self-denying ordinance so far that his book falls below the dignity of history. Intended as a model of objectivity, it has become a nerveless chronicle, useful chiefly as a cram-book for examinations. A purely political history such as he has set out to write is in any case likely to be arid, if not positively misleading, for it has little meaning



except in its connection with social and economic history. The old-fashioned Liberalism which Mr. Spender never allows to emerge in any comment seeps through in his complete disregard of the Marxian view of history—a view which would inevitably affect a younger historian of equal intelligence, however inadequate he might consider it. His book is the summarised version of an extended history, in which, perhaps, he will find room for elegance, emotion and philosophy, at the risk of showing himself, like Gibbon and Macaulay, frankly and humanely a partisan.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

## TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

**Prefaces.** By BERNARD SHAW. *Constable.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

To any one born in 1880, who was not entirely unaffected by the intellectual ferment of his youth, the reading of these collected prefaces is a mixture of pain and pleasure. *Plays Unpleasant* and *Plays Pleasant* were published a year before I went up to Cambridge. At that time many young men were going up to the universities in a state of violent, but nebulous, intellectual revolt against the complacent standards of Victorian society, its cant, respectability, sentimentality, and sordid brutality which they had felt to be smothering them like some obese and obscene incubus in their public schools and families. Mr. Shaw and his plays and prefaces came to them as Socrates and his terrible questions and interminably inconvenient conversations must have come to the unfortunate young men who had Meletos and other similar respectable Athenians as their parents. They came with a sense of immense release and relief; it was the feeling of being awakened from a horrible, suffocating nightmare by a knock at the door and some divine housemaid saying: "Eight o'clock, Sir!" That was all that Mr. Shaw said, but what a relief and revelation it was to hear a man say it in 1900 on the stage or in a preface—"eight o'clock, Sir!"—about parents and children, sex and war, prostitutes and cabinet ministers, even about just men and women. And he said it with such wit and vigour, such force, artistry, and humanity, that it seemed impossible that he should not wake even the old and middle-aged out of their comfortable and complacent slumbers.

There was no living man to whom the generations which came to maturity between 1900 and 1914 owed as much as to Mr. Shaw. *Poems and Ballads* and *The Way of All Flesh* evoked the same response, but Swinburne and Butler were too poetic or too academic to be satisfactory leaders. It was Mr. Shaw who was sweeping down the cobwebs, opening all the windows, waking every one up and leading us all into a new era of enlightenment and civilisation. And now looking back from 1934 through these collected prefaces it is very pleasant to recall that "glorious time, a happy time," but extremely unpleasant to look round and observe that it is not Mr. Shaw but the barbarians who have conquered. Nothing less than a world war could have prevented Mr. Shaw from winning the minds of succeeding generations to truth, decency, socialism, peace, and civilisation. So they made a world war, and ever since the barbarians have naturally been on top. Hitler, Mussolini, Pilsudski, Schuschnigg, and Mosley!

In most ages of development there has appeared sooner or later a man of whom, looking back, it is possible to say: "There is the really civilised man of that age; he is the type of what all its citizens might have become if the barbarians had not destroyed the civilisation." Socrates, for instance, embodied what all the Athenians might have become if the Athenian civilisation had developed. In Erasmus one may observe the kind of civilised man that the Renaissance might have produced. Mr. Shaw embodies the civilisation which we ought to be just beginning to enjoy, but which no one in our time will see. Like Socrates and Erasmus, Mr. Shaw refuses to acknowledge defeat. Just as they remained hopeful to the last, even when confronted by the cup of hemlock or Martin Luther, so Mr. Shaw seems to believe that he can civilise a Mussolini or a Hitler.

Well, perhaps Mr. Shaw is right and his indomitable optimism justified, for, as Montaigne and many of the other civilised men with whom he stands have remarked, it is the journey, not the arrival, which matters. It is wiser and pleasanter to forget for a moment the barbarism which is engulfing us, and to observe in these prefaces what a magnificent journey Mr. Shaw has travelled between *Widowers' Houses* and *On the Rocks*. It has been a long journey in pursuit of truth, honesty, decency, humanity, justice, freedom, and happiness. It is astonishing that so many people have questioned the seriousness and persistance of the pursuit. Mr. Shaw is completely justified in his continual protest against the common view of him as a mere maker of witty paradoxes. It is the old instinctive and always effective trick of the barbarians to represent the really serious and dangerous revolutionary as an irresponsible jester. Thirty years ago Mr. Shaw remarked that he had "the temperament of a schoolmaster and the pursuits of a vestryman." There is a profound truth in the remark and also in his further self-analysis:

> No doubt that literary knack of mine which happens to amuse the British public distracts attention from my character; but the character is there none the less, solid as bricks. I have a conscience; and conscience is always anxiously explanatory.

And if one wants to show what Mr. Shaw's conscience is—the conscience of a really civilised man of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—if one has to explain the nature of his intense seriousness, his clearsightedness, and his passion for pursuing the truth, one can quote the following passage from the first preface which he ever wrote—forty years ago:

> But in claiming place for my play among works of art, I must make a melancholy reservation. One or two friendly readers may find it interesting, amusing, even admirable, as far as a mere topical farce can excite admiration; but nobody will find it a beautiful or lovable work. It is saturated with the vulgarity of the life it represents: the people do not speak nobly, live gracefully, or sincerely face their own position: the author is not giving expression in pleasant fancies to the underlying beauty and romance of happy life, but dragging up to the smooth surface of "respectability" a handful of the slime and foulness of its polluted bed, and playing off your laughter at the scandal of the exposure against your shudder at its blackness. I offer it as my own criticism of the author of *Widowers' Houses* that the disillusion which makes all great dramatic poets tragic has here made him only derisive; and derision is by common consent a baser atmosphere than that of tragedy. I had better have written a beautiful play, like *Twelfth Night*, or a grand play, like the tragic masterpieces; but, frankly, I was not able to: modern commercialism is a bad art school, and cannot, with all its robberies, murders and prostitutions, move us in the grand manner to pity and terror: it is squalid, futile, blundering, mean, ridiculous, for ever uneasily pretending to be the wide-minded, humane, enterprising thing it is not. It is not my fault, reader, if my art is the expression of my sense of moral and intellectual perversity rather than of my sense of beauty.

LEONARD WOOLF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## UNPLEASANT CHARACTERS

**Shabby Tiger.** By HOWARD SPRING. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
**Penang Appointment.** By NORMAN COLLINS. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
**Barnham Rectory.** By DOREEN WALLACE. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.

Years of experience as a reporter and a literary critic have persuaded Mr. Spring that a jaded public will only pay attention to extremes. From reading *Shabby Tiger*, anyone unacquainted with Manchester would imagine it a drunk and disorderly city, in a perpetual orgy of excitement about races, or Communist meetings, or the "walking" of the school-children, which in sober truth only takes place once a year. There are no grey tones in Mr. Spring's Manchester, and no one goes regularly to work. "Shabby Tiger" is a painter, lean, hawk-like and hungry-looking, who knocks off several masterpieces in half an hour. Of the three women characters, one is exaggeratedly cheap (her hair is like "Blackpool sand varnished") and two are exaggeratedly beautiful. Anna is an uncompromising rebel and Rachel an uncompromising climber. In contrast with these staccato creations "Holy Moses," a bookmaker's clerk with a suicidal passion for cats, arouses perhaps more affection in the reader than he deserves. William Faulkner could have got away with people as unpleasant as Rachel, Anna and Shabby Tiger; but Faulkner would have frightened us and left us sober because his monsters have roots. In trying to score a hit every time Mr. Spring overshoots the mark. He writes of these violent people against their distorted background in such a strained, exhibitionist style that nothing is recognisable and nothing therefore really surprising. It is true that when we meet Jenny and discover how she forced him into marriage by blackmailing his father, the hero's attitude and behaviour become more credible, but this is at the end of the book.

In *Penang Appointment* a drunken bankrupt sells his daughter to a successful sensualist; then, foiled by death, he tries immediately to resell her to the man who killed the sensualist. Nasty characters again; yet such is the poise of this delicious book, that both the villains are comprehensible, pitiable, even—on occasion—likeable people. They are surprising enough for a short story; but, given their circumstances and their characters, what happens has the recognisable quality essential to a novel. The probable and the surprising are mixed in the right proportions, except perhaps where Brentano's death is concerned. Would a man so noisy and so thick-skinned die conveniently at the critical moment? In real life, no. In the novel the warning of the incompetent ship's doctor that he might get a clot on the brain was hardly enough; there should have been some other omen to prepare us for that colossal exit. The beauty of Gratia, the bankrupt's daughter, is subtly conveyed by Mr. Collins, and is so much of a piece with her personality that there is no occasion to complain here of the tedious beauty of heroines. After the crisis the book hurries a little too much. Gratia's change of feeling—from horror at the act of killing, which nearly makes a nun of her, to acceptance of her living lover—is not explained; but perhaps it is better to land at Penang without risking an anti-climax. Mr. Collins writes so well, and visualises the ship and the sea and the people with such astonishing freshness, that every lap of this odd voyage is entertaining.

*Barnham Rectory* is a more ambitious novel than either *Shabby Tiger* or *Penang Appointment*, in that the setting is more than a convenience and much more than a random collection of highlights. The Rectory kitchen and the Rectory garden, parish events, the agricultural slump and the trouble over tithes play an important part in the story. The socialist Rector is an attractive character, and his lame son makes a good foil for his daughter Audrey, who comes down from Cambridge to act as curate and revolutionise the parish. Audrey's high-handed priggishness is affectionately endured by her father, by Jerry the gardener who loves her and by the little servant girl who loves Jerry, but the parish does not take kindly to it. (It is impossible to blame the parish.) At the climax of the book poor Jerry finds his idol being kissed by an eligible young man of her own class, is cruelly snubbed by Audrey, gets drunk and drowns himself; little Emmy, the servant girl, is drowned trying to save him; and Audrey throws herself into the arms of the eligible young man. Up to this denouement the story goes very well, but where the chief characters ought to absorb our attention, to develop and reveal themselves, *Barnham Rectory* weakens. Miss Wallace relies too much on her setting to carry the book forward; her characters have no wings. The Rector is convincing among his farmers; so are "Margrut" in her kitchen and Jerry in his garden. In a real parish raw life every now and then breaks through the routine, but in a novel steeped in the daily round the characters bewilder us if they break away from their environment, because there is nothing in them except what the author has put there. Would Jerry, an adorer of gardens, really commit suicide? It is difficult to believe in Audrey's new life with Alan, or in Alan's power to detach himself from Barnham society. What, apart from a sense of humour and muscular ordinariness, is Alan? What goes on in Jerry's mind during the long night between Audrey's snub and his blundering fall into the pond? Miss Wallace makes only a faint effort to answer. The tragedy of Emmy, on the other hand, is beautifully handled: innocent Emmy was cut out for disaster from the beginning.

OLGA MARTIN

## PHILIP SNOWDEN

**An Autobiography.** By VISCOUNT SNOWDEN. Vol. I. *Nicholson and Watson.* 21s.

The first volume of Lord Snowden's Autobiography carries us to the Peace of Versailles; the most significant part of his story is reserved for a later instalment. What we have is not very different from a score of similar autobiographies which statesmen in retirement publish as *pièces justificatives* of their life-work. And what we have is the less interesting because, apart from an occasional judgment of a man or of an event, Lord Snowden tells us little that is significant about the years with which he deals. What journalists said of his speeches, what he thought of the different politicians with whom he was associated, scraps about the suffrage movement, temperance, the Liberal Government, the formation of the Labour Party—so far his reminiscences are, on the whole, the kind of pedestrian stuff a man thinks up after dinner to interest guests who inquire without probing too far into the answers. The scale of the enterprise is large; but the interest of the result is, for so vivid a personality as Lord Snowden, pitifully small.

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On his own painting, he emerges as an eager social reformer who fought stoutly for some fine causes. He was eloquent, courageous, obstinate, and determined. There is a good deal of the industrious apprentice in his composition, and his Socialism, one would judge, is more an emotional distaste for inequality than a positive and coherent doctrine. He admires Keir Hardie profoundly, though recognising that he was unfitted for constructive leadership. He thinks well of the type of Trade Union leader represented by Sir David Shackleton. He has not much use for Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Mr. Henderson (against whom his malice is constant), or Mr. Lansbury. His judgments upon other contemporaries do not add much to the pictures usually drawn. And as he draws the social pattern of his period, it is significant that it presents itself to him less as a movement of principle than as a series of incidents devoid of any central meaning. It is not for nothing that Lord Snowden, as he confesses, was never able to read Karl Marx.

Lord Snowden himself is clearly a " character " in the colloquial sense of that term. He has a fine self-respect, high standards of personal conduct, much shrewd sagacity, a bitter impatience with those who differ from him, that rugged immersion in immediacies which is produced by the conditions of the parliamentary system. It is significant that he speaks more warmly of Campbell-Bannerman than of any other politician in the book, and that his most vivid memory of " C.-B." is the famous " enough of this foolery " speech. It is significant also that though he had casual contact with Tchicherin for years before the Russian Revolution, he never explored the possibilities of that acquaintance; Lord Snowden is one of those happy Englishmen whose intellectual interests stop at the white cliffs of Dover. He hates well; and he has a fine contempt for what he does not understand. He has a long memory, and the letter from Mr. MacDonald to the Mayor of Leicester (p. 364) which he has disinterred from the musty archives of the war is not only, in itself, the finest example of the Prime Minister's eloquent indirection I have ever seen but an indication of what we may hope for in his second volume. Perhaps his account of the Labour Governments he did so much to destroy will compensate for the *longueurs* of this first instalment.

H. J. LASKI

## A TRAVEL BOOK BY DOS PASSOS

**In All Countries.** By JOHN DOS PASSOS. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.

Mr. John Dos Passos's new book, *In All Countries*, bears some resemblance to that admirable and comparatively neglected volume *Devil Take the Hindmost* by Edmund Wilson, published in America as *A Year of the Jitters*. Both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Dos Passos are radical journalists of uncommon force and aptitude; but, whereas the role of critic and commentator seems to suit Mr. Wilson best, we cannot forget that it was as the author of novels and stories that Mr. Dos Passos originally made his name. For this reason, one regrets his divergence into " straight " reporting. There is no doubt that he does it very well; but then, the chief weakness of an orthodox Marxian point of view is that it represents the entire world in terms of a single problem, and though some such simplification of values may be required for the purposes of a practical revolutionary it does not improve the work of a serious writer. It lends a certain triteness to the gist of his arguments; and indirect arguments are the most powerful.

The author's indignation does him credit. What one complains of is not his point of view in itself, but the slightly stereotyped pattern of black and white—virtuous workers and villainous bosses—that it is inclined to produce at every juncture of the story. Thus, while dealing with Mexico and the Zapatist rebellion, Mr. Dos Passos seems to be unaware of—or to have not troubled to ascertain—the real facts of the case. Emiliano Zapata, the agrarian leader, a pure-blooded Indian who championed the Indian peasantry against the ranchers, sugar-exploiters, urban capitalists and other " men in black suits," was by all accounts not quite the *preux chevalier*, or hard-riding, stern-eyed evangelist, that Mr. Dos Passos would apparently like to imagine. Even for Mexico, his atrocities were notorious. Some rumour of his more sadistic pranks would appear to have reached his American admirer; for after telling us that:

> When the troops of Pablo Gonzalez captured a Zapatista they made him dig his own grave. " So you wanted the land," they'd say. " Well take it," and then they'd shoot him. This was considered a great joke among the ranchers and the sugar exploiters.

he adds that " the Zapatistas had their jokes too, as when they captured and destroyed a railroad train and shot the escort and took all the clothes off the city-dressed passengers." Zapata's taste for unconventional and bloodthirsty jokes equalled, and probably exceeded, that of his enemies.

In such details, Mr. Dos Passos is disingenuous. Elsewhere, that tone of nostalgia and vague uneasiness so often found among bourgeois intellectuals, who look forward, with an occasional, carefully suppressed qualm, to a state of society in which it is possible that they themselves may have no appointed place, comes peeping through his vivid and militant prose. Is the intellectual a man trained to sit on the fence? Visiting the scene of an American coal-strike, he is asked by a young coal-miner if he is " in this business too? I said I was a writer, writers were people who stayed on the sidelines as long as they could. They were sympathisers. He looked disappointed. ' I thought maybe you was a lodge member, in for a revolution too . . . because I'm in it . . . up to the neck.' "

Leaving Russia, Mr. Dos Passos was obliged to meet the same downright query with the same honest and sympathetic, if somewhat ineffective, reply. He was a sympathiser, he had to admit, rather than an out-and-out participant; and his inability to throw himself into a movement which he admired, but in which he was debarred from participating alike by his profession and education (coupled with the disquieting experience recorded in *Terror* and his glimpse of an intellectual who had fallen behind), seems to have saddened an otherwise enjoyable tour:

> The Moscow of now, the Moscow of to-day, the Moscow of the new order, how can you get hold of it? I can't do anything about it. I hear the tramp of it under my window every morning when the Red Army soldiers pass with their deep throaty singing, I see it in the kindergarten. . . . I see it most among the youngsters who run the Sanitary Propaganda Theatre. . . . I see it in the communist friends I make who are all the time working, arguing, organising, teaching, doing office work and who, no matter how pale and haggard from overwork they are when they come home to those already late afternoon Moscow dinners, are always ready to talk, explain, ask questions. But an onlooker in Moscow is about as out of place as he would be in the assembly line of a Ford plant. If you are an engineer or a mechanic or a school teacher you can do something, but if you're a writer you're merely in the unenviable position of standing round and watching other people do the work.

" Well, you're a reporter, you tell yourself," Mr. Dos Passos continues. " You're gathering impressions. What the hell good are impressions? " It is his impressions, however, and the vividness and clarity with which he has caught and fixed them for his readers' benefit, that give *In All Countries* a charm far superior to that of the average modern travel-book. Mr. Dos Passos is a writer before he is a propagandist. The itinerary described in this volume ranges from America to Russia, from modern Spain to the volcanic uplands of Mexico; and nowhere does the author's attention flag. Throughout he shows a sensitiveness to natural beauty at least as striking as the remarkable acuteness of his satirical portraiture.

## ART AND PROPAGANDA

**Mammonart.** By UPTON SINCLAIR. *Laurie.* 7s. 6d.

Mr. Sinclair is a smashing propagandist. At his best, too, he has shown himself a first-rate reporter. *The Jungle* was a horrifying display of facts, and his account of the Sacco-Vanzetti trial is as good a piece of journalism as has been done in our time. In both these books the facts were inescapable; Mr. Sinclair's driving-power sent them hurtling at the reader. The same enthusiasm, however, has been responsible for a good deal of bombinating that is bad even as journalism; for he has the sort of raw energy which makes it possible for him to write a thoroughly bad book with conviction and zest. His last volume—or was it the last but one?—contained a mass of boring and quite unimportant details about Hollywood high finance. Now, in *Mammonart*, he sets out to debunk literature, to write a " text-book of culture " for the class-conscious, and the result, though obviously sincere, is muddled, inconsequent and frequently inept.

He begins with the assertion that " all art is propaganda "; and the rest of the book suffers from an attempt to escape the consequences of this remark. What exactly Mr. Sinclair means here by " art " and " propaganda " we must read the book to find out—and it is not at all sure that we shall be enlightened by the end of it. We learn (p. 21) that Herrick's " Gather ye rosebuds " is propaganda for " an attitude of relaxation towards life." Very

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soon it becomes obvious—though Mr. Sinclair does not say so—that the field of literature is thronged by such double-faced propagandists as John Milton, whose "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" must confront students with a difficult choice—what can one do except spin the coin? And, of course, there are the multifaced, like Shakespeare, from whom not even a heads-or-tails decision is to be expected.

A few quotations from *Mammonart* will suffice to show how Mr. Sinclair has met his difficulties. He debunks "Kubla Khan":

> . . . Moreover—and here is the essential point of our argument—almost every image in this poem turns out on examination to be a lie. There is no such place as Xanadu; and Kubla Khan has nothing to teach us except avoidance. His pleasures were bloody and infamous, and there was nothing "stately" about his "pleasure-dome." There never was a river Alph, and the sacredness of any river is a fiction of a priestly caste, preying on the people. There are no "caverns measureless to man"; while as for a "sunless sea," a few arc-lights would solve the problem, etc.

Coleridge, incidentally, is described as a man "frightened out of his wits by the French Revolution."

Next, let us take *Madame Bovary*—which Mr. Sinclair, strangely enough, praises. After giving us an unorthodox picture of Flaubert as a "lanky provincial," he ascribes the greatness of his novel to its "message":

> The important idea which he put across is that we are all of us, good or bad, wise or foolish, stupid or clever, passengers on the same ship of life, tossed by the same storms, and bound for the same harbour. . . .

And to clinch this, he adds:

> . . . That is the propaganda which makes the greatness of every work of realism, if it has greatness.

Here are some further examples of Mr. Sinclair's enlightened criticism:

> [Joseph Conrad was] as grim and determined a propagandist as ever used fiction for a medium.

> There is a better side of Goethe, which must not be overlooked.

> He [Shelley] wrote also political comedies in the style of Aristophanes—representing English society by an ecstatic chorus of pigs. So savage is this lashing that even to-day English critics keep silent about "Swellfoot the Tyrant."

> Is it possible for a great poet to be conservative?

Now, it is possible that in a book of extraordinary originality some of these statements, in their contexts, might have a definite meaning and intelligence, but unfortunately they possess here no more than their face value, for Mr. Sinclair is usually completely insensible to the values of the works he is criticising. Of course, he has likes and dislikes. Those writers in whom he discovers traces of a revolutionary attitude come in for his highest praise. We are not surprised to find that he has an admiration for Bunyan, Zola, and Shelley. With Keats, however, he lets the cat out of the bag. The poems do not make a very striking example of revolutionary propaganda (except perhaps of the sort of "propaganda" which Mr. Sinclair hates most), but he argues that "here is a man whose life and personality constitute one of the greatest pieces of radical propaganda in the history of English literature." How? Well, he was born "the son of a stable-keeper"; "he did not attend a public school or university"; and "he was a simple, crude fellow—a little chap not much over five feet high." This sort of argument is typical of much of the book.

Mr. Sinclair fails, then, to give us the cross-section of literary history he has aimed at—one chapter of *The Theory of the Leisure Class* is worth more than all Mr. Sinclair's four hundred pages put together. He is bewildered, because his subject cannot be reduced to a set of facts. Frequently, his taste conflicts with his opinions. And we are left with the impression, if anything, that a work of art can only be propaganda for itself.

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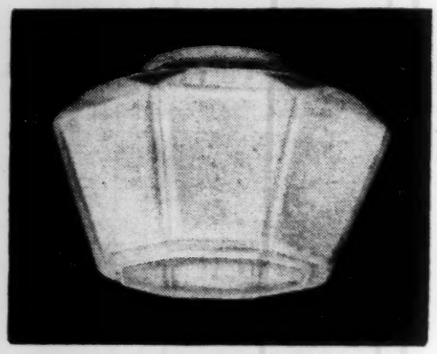

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**Behind the Doctor.** By LOGAN CLENDENNING. *Heinemann.* 21s.

This is not a text-book but a popular history of medicine, and, on the supposition that "every person must be a physician and every physician must be a person," written for doctors and laymen alike. Dr. Clendenning is a showman. With innumerable anecdotes and illustrations we are raced through the ages, a fascinating motion picture, from magic practices to scientific method. The Roman physician Galen's influence, we are told, lasted fifteen hundred years, his system of empiricism suiting the mediaeval spirit. After the first accurate human anatomy in 1543 great men leave their names on every part of the body. Servetus included his discovery of the pulmonary circulation in a Theological Treatise for which he was burned. Before anaesthetics were used in France "the great surgeon Dupuytren deliberately made so insulting a remark to a lady patient that she fainted, and in this condition he operated on her." Scientific curiosity even prompted John Hunter to inoculate himself with syphilis. It is significant that Dr. Clendenning devotes five pages to the private life of Edward Wortley Montague because he was the first European to be inoculated against smallpox, and half a page to Freud, who broke down the rigid line of demarcation between natural and mental science and out of the art of psychoanalysis made a science which can be learned and passed on, so that psycho-therapy may not depend entirely on the personality of the doctor.

**Leaders of Europe.** By EMIL LUDWIG. *Nicholson and Watson.* 18s.

Herr Ludwig is a professed hero-worshipper, and his trouble is that at the moment heroes in any true sense are hard to seek. "I could," he declares, "readily take part in the hero-worship which holds the youth of Europe in its fanatical grip to-day if only I could see a few more heroes to worship." The old fallacious dream of the benevolent despot, the dictator after one's own heart, is a strange dream to be dreamt by one whose books have so recently been burnt in a Nazi bonfire. Hitler, unfortunately, does not figure in this biological series, or Herr Ludwig might have recognised more acutely than he does how unpleasant it may be to suffer the dictation of another man's hero. The leaders he brings under review are Briand, Lloyd George, Masaryk, Motta, Mussolini, Nansen, Rathenau, Stalin, and Venizelos, all of whom he has known personally. The studies are agreeably written but are not profound. In the main they are appreciations, though the Lloyd George has its acridities. The Masaryk is the most enthusiastic, for he is one whom Herr Ludwig would choose for dictator. But the best thing in the book is the Stalin. Owing to the necessity of interpretation the interview took the form of question and answer, and the answers were translated verbatim. The questions were shrewd, and the answers gave a simplicity that bring the man very vividly and convincingly before us.

**Victorian Wallflowers.** By MALCOLM ELWIN. *Cape.* 10s.

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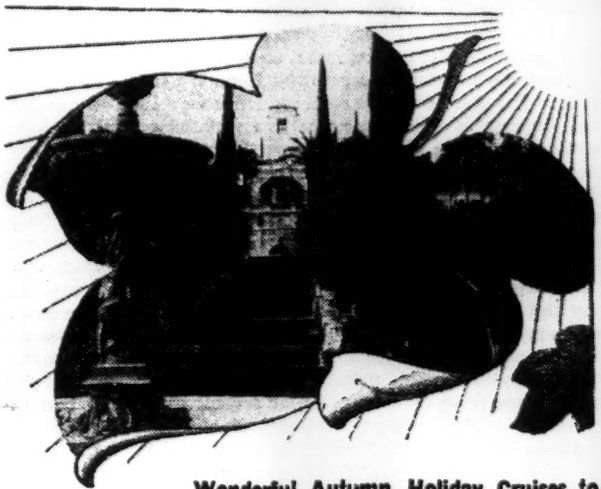

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*CROSS SECTION* *REVIEWS*

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is notable for the omnivorous reading it displays and the extraordinary comparisons which that reading has provoked. Trollope, for instance, is described as "a little Thackeray in hobnails and a smock"! Mr. Elwin assures us that even though "skipping" such best sellers as Mrs. Henry Wood and Ouida he enjoyed reading them. If he really did, he must, one thinks, have quoted exclusively the passages he skipped. Mrs. Henry Wood is irrecoverably moribund, but, apart from her ability to tell a good story, her characters were not all puppets, nor her social observations as negligible as Mr. Elwin implies, and her more literary rivals angrily averred. As an illustrator she had her points, even if as an artist she simply did not exist. Ouida on the other hand, dead, one imagines, beyond resuscitation, lived and wrote in a day-dream of social absurdities and angry generosities, and was the "poor passionate artist" James Runciman once declared her to be. Mr. Elwin, however, though entertaining enough, is not at his best among these best sellers. The chapters he devotes to "Christopher North, Dr. Maginnand, John Forster, their friends and their rivals" are by far the best in a book, which, if weak on the critical, is nevertheless on the historical side full of matter.

**The Decline and Fall of the Medieval Papacy.** By L. ELLIOTT BINNS. *Methuen.* 16s.

Dr. Binns discovers the decline and fall of the medieval Papacy in an ever-increasing tendency towards a secularisation of its functions, and that "the failure was due, in part, to its basing the spiritual and moral leadership of Christendom on the possession of temporal power." It was this assumption of worldly dominion—revealing a continuity with Imperial Rome—which led to the long struggle with the German Emperors in which both parties exhausted themselves. The first few chapters of the book are devoted to a summary of the gradual rise of the Papacy until it reaches its apogee under Innocent III. These chapters are necessarily abbreviated in relation to the rest of the book, but are succinctly stated. The downward course of the Papal power is traced, in greater detail, over three centuries; and Dr. Binns, happily not confining himself to a strictly chronological sequence, finds room for some most interesting chapters on the rise of Humanism and national feeling, the Reformation, and the Renaissance. The author examines the Papacy as successor to the crown of the Caesars, and therefore the book may be read as a supplementary volume to Gibbon. If there are rather too many interruptions in the text—owing to footnotes—for the general reader, these and the book itself will be found useful and important for scholars.

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is notable for the omnivorous reading it displays and the extraordinary comparisons which that reading has provoked. Trollope, for instance, is described as "a little Thackeray in hobnails and a smock"! Mr. Elwin assures us that even though "skipping" such best sellers as Mrs. Henry Wood and Ouida he enjoyed reading them. If he really did, he must, one thinks, have quoted exclusively the passages he skipped. Mrs. Henry Wood is irrecoverably moribund, but, apart from her ability to tell a good story, her characters were not all puppets, nor her social observations as negligible as Mr. Elwin implies, and her more literary rivals angrily averred. As an illustrator she had her points, even if as an artist she simply did not exist. Ouida on the other hand, dead, one imagines, beyond resuscitation, lived and wrote in a day-dream of social absurdities and angry generosities, and was the "poor passionate artist" James Runciman once declared her to be. Mr. Elwin, however, though entertaining enough, is not at his best among these best sellers. The chapters he devotes to "Christopher North, Dr. Maginnand, John Forster, their friends and their rivals" are by far the best in a book, which, if weak on the critical, is nevertheless on the historical side full of matter.

**The Decline and Fall of the Medieval Papacy.** By L. ELLIOTT BINNS. *Methuen.* 16s.

Dr. Binns discovers the decline and fall of the medieval Papacy in an ever-increasing tendency towards a secularisation of its functions, and that "the failure was due, in part, to its basing the spiritual and moral leadership of Christendom on the possession of temporal power." It was this assumption of worldly dominion—revealing a continuity with Imperial Rome—which led to the long struggle with the German Emperors in which both parties exhausted themselves. The first few chapters of the book are devoted to a summary of the gradual rise of the Papacy until it reaches its apogee under Innocent III. These chapters are necessarily abbreviated in relation to the rest of the book, but are succinctly stated. The downward course of the Papal power is traced, in greater detail, over three centuries; and Dr. Binns, happily not confining himself to a strictly chronological sequence, finds room for some most interesting chapters on the rise of Humanism and national feeling, the Reformation, and the Renaissance. The author examines the Papacy as successor to the crown of the Caesars, and therefore the book may be read as a supplementary volume to Gibbon. If there are rather too many interruptions in the text—owing to footnotes—for the general reader, these and the book itself will be found useful and important for scholars.

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silencers which their juvenile owners worship. If one of these cars, or almost any motor cycle is handled ostentatiously—the engine being started at high revolutions, revved up two or three times by way of preparation for action, and then accelerated down a fairly clear street with three or four gear changes, the disturbance far exceeds that created by a thousand tons of ordinary traffic. Squealing brakes and squealing tyres add a soprano *obbligato* to the din. The bass accompaniment is furnished in full measure by the heavy stuff. Comparatively modern buses and coaches and lorries emit a terrible grinding uproar in a low key during acceleration on their lower gears.

My personal opinion is that the use of some low-toned alarm may prove essential after dark in all localities where head lamps cannot be used because of their dazzling effect, where blind corners are numerous, and where pedestrians exist in masses at rush hours. If that is so, relief from the sirens will still be well worth while. But the term " silence zone " will remain a ludicrous misnomer until silent motor-car transmissions and silent exhausts are introduced. The silent transmission is not yet in sight, though there would be little cause for complaint with really modern cars, if they were mainly driven after dark on the direct gear at small throttle openings; transmission noise becomes obtrusive when worn cars are driven hard on indirect gears. The silencer problem is far more soluble. Even now the police could and should penalise a host of sports cars, which create a terrible racket during acceleration on their lower gears. Aircraft designers are clamouring for improved silence in planes, and the whole subject is undergoing concentrated research. The British Association has just invented an improved silencer for motor cycles, which actually produces a rise in the horse-power of any engine, and can be adopted by any motor-cycle manufacturer without the payment of royalties. The cause and remedy of squealing brakes is already completely explored. If Mr. Hore-Belisha cares to use his weight, he can easily produce much quieter cities. The suggestion that it might be possible to prohibit hooting altogether, by day as well as by night, is intriguing, for it offers a simple method of imposing a far tenser vigilance on all road users; but I personally doubt whether human nature can climb to such altitudes in a moment of time.

R. E. DAVIDSON

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# Week-end Competitions

## No. 234

**Set by John Moore**

Suppose—if you can suppose such an awful thing—that something in the nature of an Anti-Vice Society had existed in Elizabethan times. Give an extract from a protest made by this society after the First Night of *Romeo and Juliet*. It is suggested, but not insisted, that the protest should concentrate on those speeches of Mercutio which immediately precede the Balcony Scene. Entries, to be eligible for a prize, must be printable. For the two best protests we offer a First Prize of Two Guineas, and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, September 14.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

## RESULT OF COMPETITION 232

**Set by Gerald Bullett**

In THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of August 11, on page 181, there appeared an admirable poem by A. V. Stuart in which a " lone gaunt spinster," in whose mind burns the true poetic fire of Shakespeare and Milton, is accorded homage at the expense of a more transient beauty:

> I looked at the girls, with their silken curls tossing,
> Their redder lips than nature, their bright eyes of desire.
> O brief is your springtime (I thought), my blossomy darlings,
> But hers the authentic, the undying fire.

One reader of this poem was moved to say to himself: " Yes, that is true and wise enough. And yet . . ." For an amplification of that *and yet*, in the form of either one or at most two additional stanzas in the same measure, we offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea. Poetry is asked for, not facetiousness. It is not necessary that the words " And yet . . . " should occur.

**Report by Gerald Bullett**

An alarmingly large bundle of entries. Having read them all I retained thirteen for closer inspection; from this group of thirteen, five emerged; and from these five, one. Among the thirteen were those of F. D. Rudwick, William Summers, Palermo (who made a good philosophical point), T. E. Casson (agreeably allusive), Gaunt Spinster, H.C.M., Alpha, and Jane Short. Of the Five that remained—Midas, D.N., Greenhill, William Bliss, A. B. Stokes—not one, I fear, seems to me to reach First-prize-winning standard: I therefore recommend Midas for Second Prize—and retire apologetically, amid hisses.

PRIZE

> Though short is the spring, who can withstand its sweetness?
> Immortal to the young is the transience of youth.
> Oh long is your autumn (I thought) poor withered woman,
> And cruel in your mirror the winter of truth.

MIDAS

## CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 89.—BRIDGE

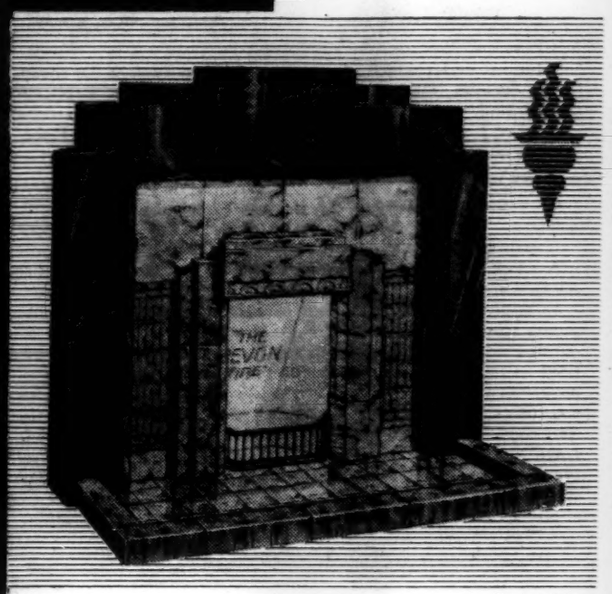
" Bridge last night," said the Doctor. " We played five rubbers, cutting in each rubber. The scores ran rather high: 1,800, 900, 2,300, 1,300, 1,600. We were playing £1 per hundred."

" Any luck? "

" The Colonel and I won. The Padre and the Admiral lost. The Colonel was the big noise, though. His winnings exceeded mine by fifteen times the difference between the Padre's losses and the Admiral's. The Admiral, by the way, was the bigger loser."

*Who partnered whom, and who were the winners, in each of the five rubbers?*

# Beautiful fires for beautiful rooms



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$$L + G = C$$
$$\text{and } mL + nG = 101$$

where $L$ and $G$ are the marks obtained in Latin and Greek respectively and $C$ is a constant. Experiment will show that $C$ can only be 11. This gives 27 integral solutions, but (a point some solvers have overlooked) two yield the same totals for $mL$ and $nG$:

| No. | $m$ | $L$ | $n$ | $G$ | No. | $m$ | $L$ | $n$ | $G$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 10 | 91 | 1 | 15 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 2 |
| 2 | 2 | 10 | 81 | 1 | 16 | 11 | 9 | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 3 | 10 | 71 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 8 | 31 | 3 |
| 4 | 4 | 10 | 61 | 1 | 18 | 4 | 8 | 23 | 3 |
| 5 | 5 | 10 | 51 | 1 | 19 | 7 | 8 | 15 | 3 |
| 6 | 6 | 10 | 41 | 1 | 20 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 3 |
| 7 | 7 | 10 | 31 | 1 | 21 | 3 | 7 | 20 | 4 |
| 8 | 8 | 10 | 21 | 1 | 22 | 7 | 7 | 13 | 4 |
| 9 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 1 | 23 | 11 | 7 | 6 | 4 |
| 10 | 10 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 1 | 6 | 19 | 5 |
| 11 | 1 | 9 | 46 | 2 | 25 | 6 | 6 | 13 | 5 |
| 12 | 3 | 9 | 37 | 2 | 26 | 11 | 6 | 7 | 5 |
| 13 | 5 | 9 | 28 | 2 | 27 | 16 | 6 | 1 | 5 |
| 14 | 7 | 9 | 19 | 2 | | | | | |

But of these Nos. 8 and 20 are identical so far as $mL$ and $nG$ are concerned, and can therefore be eliminated in calculating the totals.

The amounts paid out in respect of Latin and Greek respectively are obviously $\Sigma mL$ and $\Sigma nG$ in pence.

*i.e.*, £5 10*s.* 1*d.* in respect of Latin,
and £5 8*s.* 9*d.* in respect of Greek.

PROBLEM 84.—KIND DR. PEDDERGOGG

*Five* points are awarded.

PROBLEM 85.—THE LOTTERY TICKETS

*Ada's ticket* .. .. .. *No.* 9
*Bessie's ticket* .. .. .. *No.* 21
*Cissie's ticket* .. .. .. *No.* 6

There are many equally satisfactory lines of approach. Each turns, however, on the progressive narrowing-down of possibilities.

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: Miss E. M. Hibbert, 7 Lansdowne Road, West Hartlepool.

There were 158 correct solutions.

*Six* points are awarded.

PROBLEM 86.—FARMER NUMERO

The answer depends on factorial analysis, plus a certain amount of trial:

| | Sheep. | Cattle. | Horses. | Pigs. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reuben .. .. | 5 | 1 | 19 | 5 |
| Enoch .. .. | 7 | 7 | 11 | 9 |
| Seth .. .. .. | 8 | 8 | 9 | 11 |
| Malachi .. .. | 12 | 6 | 7 | 14 |
| Totals .. .. | 32 | 22 | 46 | 39 |

Solutions under which one or more legatees receive "0 sheep," are, in my opinion, inadmissible as contrary to the clear implications of the wording.

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: G. L. Kahn, 8 Sussex Place, Hyde Park, W.2.

There were 135 correct solutions.

*Seven* points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

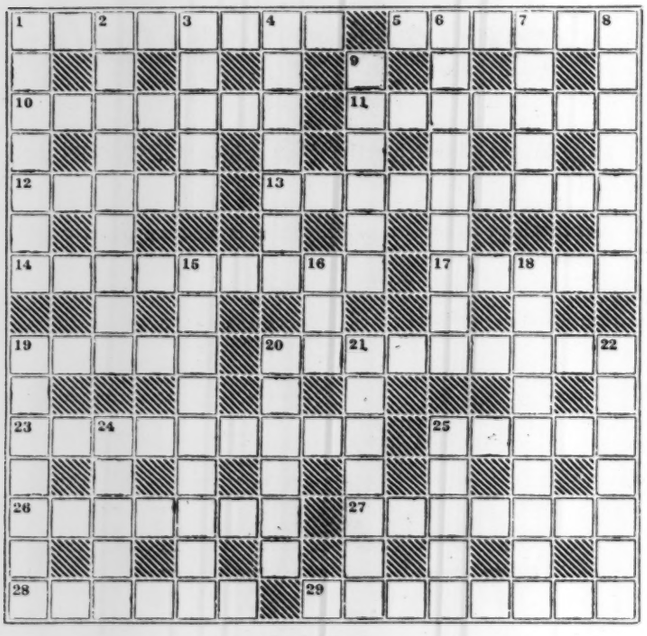
In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points, a solver is entitled to a prize, consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s.* Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

CALIBAN

## WEEK-END CROSSWORD 235

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday.



Set by L.-S.

The winner of last week's crossword is N. K. Stephen, 42 Eton Avenue, N.W.3.

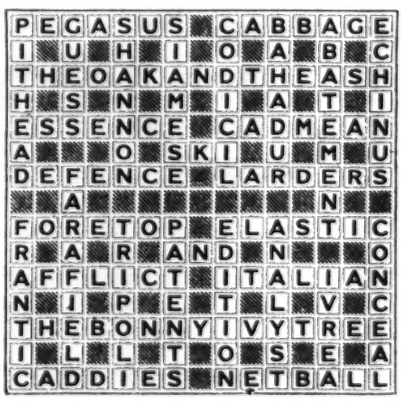
ACROSS

1. Squashy description of *delirium tremens*?
5. They would not, presumably, be kicked over by 14.
10. Now Mr. Roosevelt I'd left out.
11. Skating edge.
12. Water lily that means a good deal to us.
13. Tall Gavin will go gadding about.
14. He's a specialist of course on the turf.
17. 6 through.
19. 17 may be a fatal one.
20. Italic direction for submarine equatorial crossing?
23. Nautical traffic signal.
25. The cat set about him, the swindler.
26. A boy beater.
27. How the successful beggar leaves your purse.
28. Proverbially a lightning fastener.
29. Such things prove the rule.

DOWN

1. Excessive juggler, bottler and tumbler?
2. Profane mode of address to notable northerner.
3. They get the boot.
4. Not a fraction is allowed for it.
6. His duty is to return the shot.
7. 22 yards make serviceable ware.
8. This may be windscreen, sunshade or waterproof.
9. Hot weather should not trouble this worker.
15. Dickensian title for trade depression.
16. This toy was a 14 and a comedy.
18. Publication that enables one to count the cost.
19. Canine toreador.
20. How the three Children came through ordeal by fire.
21. Clive's French rival in India.
22. How 14 must be brought in for his professional career.
24. Gaze about you and you'll see through it.
25. Gives scope for 3.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD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THEOAKANDTHEASH
H S N M I A T I
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A O SKI U M U
DEFENCE LARDERS
A N
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